

Cambridge Military/International Politics Scrapbook 1920 to 1939

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies  
reported in Cambridge Newspapers

summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the  
Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the  
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at  
[bit.ly/CambsCollection](http://bit.ly/CambsCollection)

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.  
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in  
touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library  
where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the  
1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – [www.mikepetty.org.uk](http://www.mikepetty.org.uk) for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

These notes form part of

## *A Century of Cambridge News, from 1888*

*A Century of Cambridge News*

*Compiled by Mike Petty*

*Dedicated to John Pink, Cambridge's first Librarian, 1855-1906 and  
Charles Henry Cooper, compiler of the Annals of Cambridge*

*And to the Librarians who tried to preserve their vision of a  
'Cambridgeshire Collection'*

*Made freely available as a 'Thank You' to all those who have helped  
me discover something of the story of this great City*

*Please appreciate what it contains and correct the errors and  
omissions*

*Mike Petty  
28 June 2016*

For other stories covering this period search 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook 1897 to 1990' on the bit.ly/CambsCollection site and then scroll down to the appropriate years

For stories covering the rest of the war in Cambridge search 'A Century of Cambridge News from 1888' on the bit.ly/CambsCollection site and then search 'c.45.7'

For other more Cambridge-orientated political activity search A Century of Cambridge News from 1888' on the bit.ly/CambsCollection site and then search 'c.33'

Stories about Cambridge military activity and international politics 1920 to 1940 as reported in Cambridge Newspapers

1920 02 03

Union of Democratic Control attempted to hold 'Bolshevik' meeting but disrupted by undergraduates; senior proctor, T.R. Glover, hit by flour bomb; speaker Norman Angell rescued by police – Ch 20 02 03d

1920

From outbreak of war have been pacifists proclaiming against action taken against Germans who would have moved heaven and earth to bring war to early conclusion. They possess not a spark of British pluck ... led Cambridge gaining reputation as hotbed of Pacifism. University tried to stop this vile work; now opposition to such pro-German propaganda and return of pacifist Bertrand Russell to Trinity. Should prohibit pacifist meetings – Ch 20 03 10d

1920 06 02

Memorial Unveiled. The parochial war memorial in connection with St. John Hills Road, Cambridge was unveiled last (Tuesday) evening by Bishop Price, Archdeacon of Ely. The memorial, which was designed by Mr. A. P. Macalister takes the form of a tablet in the south wall of the chancel. Underneath the representation of a dove hovering over a field of battle, is a polished brass plate bearing the names of 45 men of the parish who fell in the war. The memorial is in Hopton Wood stone in early English style, and was executed by Messrs. Leyton and Leach 20 06 02 CIPof

*For reports of the unveiling of other parish war memories see Century of Cambridge News section c.62*

1920 07 13

Training disable soldiers – 100 in classes for diamond cutting, clock repairing, jewellery, carpentry and joinery and bespoke tailoring; men come from around the country - CDN 20 07 13

1920 09 15

Borough War Memorial.—Statue of Soldier Recommended. Station Road Corner Site. A meeting was held at the Cambridge Guildhall yesterday (Tuesday) of the Monuments Sub-Committee of the Cambridgeshire Joint War Memorial. The meeting gave its final consideration to the suggested monument, for the Borough of Cambridge. The sculpture and architect were in attendance and explained their scheme, which the Committee agreed to place before the General Committee with the recommendation that it be adopted. The architect for the Record in Ely Cathedral regretted that he had not been able to complete his revised plans but hoped to do so by the end of September. The Committee decided to meet again on October 2nd to consider, this scheme and to interview the architect. 20 09 15 CIPof

1920 12 01

Bolshevism in Cambridge – Comrade Stewart, a bewiskered paid Bolshevik agitator and organiser of the Communist Party at meeting on Parker's Piece – Ch 20 12 01a

1920 12 08

British Empire Union branch established in fight against Bolsheviks – Ch 20 12 08d

1920 12 29

Disabled ex-servicemen employment, 18 men being trained in tailoring, 12 each in jewellery, clock repairing and carpentry, 40 in diamond-cutting; photos in English Leather Co boot repairers and man driving traction engine – Ch 20 12 29a

1921 02 09

OT.C. mock battle in Kingston – Gt Eversden area; cottage gutted – photos – 21 02 09b, c

1921 11 26

First Poppy Day collection made on 26 November passed smoothly (not done by undergrads); undergrads asked that this collection be organised entirely by their committee & take full responsibility that no incidents [38]

1922 02 11

Dinner to recognise war work by Special Constables [4.12]

1922 04 28

A service of commemoration for the members of the college who fell in the war was held in the Chapel of Jesus College. Immediately after the service the memorial tablet was dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Ely. After a short service, the Master, amid a silence so intense that it could almost be felt, read the names inscribed on the memorial. It was an impressive scene - the clergy and choir in their surplices, row after row of gowned undergraduates, many of whom had also served, and a sprinkling of visitors from the outside world, all paying silent tribute to the 148 names read by the Master CDN c 28.4.1922

1922 05

County War memorial dedicated Ely Cathedral [4.2]

1922 07 04

His Royal Highness the Duke of York unveiled the War memorial which has been erected in Cambridge. The ceremony was attended by thousands of people and was of a deeply impressive nature. It was raining heavily as the Prince mounted the platform for the unveiling ceremony. The band played the opening bar of the hymn "O God, our help in ages past" to the accompaniment of rain drumming on hundreds of umbrellas. A few minutes later the rain ceased and the rest of the ceremony was carried through amid brilliant sunshine. The Prince pulled a rope which released the drapery revealing the bronze figure of an infantryman c22 07 04 Was not bronze statue but plaster cast painted bronze; pouring rain threatened melt plaster; (new site on island 27.1.50, moved by 3.85) [455.13.2]

1922 07 11

The model of the soldier on the Cambridge War Memorial which, owing to an unavoidable delay, had to be used for the unveiling ceremony last week, has to-day been replaced by the actual bronze, so that the figure now in position is as it will be seen for all time. The bronze was brought from the foundry at Thames Ditton by motor lorry at four o'clock this morning. Mr Kett and ten men were in waiting and so expeditiously was the work carried out that by 8 o'clock the model figure had been taken down and the other set up and fixed in its proper position. A couple of hours later the scaffolding was removed c22 07 11

1922 07 15

Boys damage remains of Barnwell military hospital where boiler house & one complete section of wooden hutment left, site overgrown [4.16]

1922 07 29

"No more war" demonstration held [2.6]

1922 08 04

The "No More War" demonstration held on Parker's Piece, Cambridge, was attended by a gratifying measure of success. The procession extended more than half the length of Gonville-place, and the crowd at the meetings held on the Piece afterwards was so large that the two platforms provided were not sufficient, and a motor-car had to be requisitioned for the purposes of a third meeting. In addition to the banners of the various societies there were numerous bearing inscriptions such as "For Peace and Freedom" (Women's International League), "Patriotism is not enough", "Cambridge Sisterhood

says No More War". In addition there were scores of bannerettes bearing the words "No More War". Mrs Nevinson referred to the number of deaths from influenza in 1918 which was really a war plague. They kept the memory of the dead alive but did they remember the maimed, the blind, shell-shocked and the mad?. No one was worrying about those men c22 08 04

1922 11

First Poppy Day rag : procession of 'animals' toured town with police escort, one of happiest rags ever seen' [38]

1923 06 12

The annual Inter-Varsity military tournament was held on the University Rifle Range, Grange Road when Cambridge beat Oxford by six events to 4. Perhaps the most popular event was the tent pegging, which reached an extremely high standard. One rarely sees it done better at Olympia. The artillery drive, too, was extremely well done. Some regular artillery officers in the audience, the hardest critics of all, seemed somewhat sceptical about it when the team drove into the arena, but after the first-time round their criticism changed to praise. The events won by Cambridge were the R.F.A. Alarm race, the individual jumping, the half section jumping, tent pegging, wrestling on horseback, and the cavalry dummy thrusting but they were beaten by Oxford in the cable laying competition. Oxford's other successes were the bayonet fighting, the artillery driving, and the tug of war c23 06 12

1923 07 30

Cambridge men and women of all shades of political opinion, and a number of children, associated themselves with the world-wide demonstrations that were held to express the determination that there shall be no more war. The Cambridge demonstration took place on Parker's Piece on Sunday afternoon. Prior to this a procession marched to the war memorial. It was headed by the Salvation Army band. The Cambridge town branch of the League of Nations Union was the first of the representative bodies, with three large appropriate banners bearing the words "No more war." The Cherry Hinton band also took part, and in the rear of the procession came a pathetic little band of "hunger marchers" from Sheffield with their own banner c23 07 30

1924 01 28

The 203rd Field Company (Cambs) Royal Engineers celebrated their fifth reunion and dinner. In January 1915 the War Office had asked whether an engineering company could be raised in Cambridge. Great efforts were made but many of the youth had already joined other units. However a start in recruiting was begun and they were able to get a few men together. Their headquarters were in East road but when numbers began to increase they had moved to Ely, March, Whittlesey and afterwards Wisbech. They had no regular Engineer officer to take command of the unit but that grand old volunteer, Colonel Harding, although he was then nearly 70 years of age, undertook the job c24 01 28

1924 11 26

Mr Mettlebury gave a short sketch of the beginnings of Fascism in Cambridge. It had started with a group of men who went with St Douglas Newton at election time to ensure him a good hearing. Some were merely there in the hope of a 'scrap' but others had ideals. After this group had formed into the Cambridge Fascist Society assistance had been offered to various candidates, including Mr Firth as Constitutional Labour Candidate, to ensure them a hearing free from organised rowdyism. He felt confident that British Fascism in Cambridge would prevail c24 11 26

1925 04 13

About 120 members of the 1st Cambridgeshire Regiment are spending the Easter weekend under canvas at Madingley. The Cambridge-St Neots road acted as part of the front line of a British force which was endeavouring to repel an invader marching on London. The Norfolk Brigade was ordered to take up position from Oakington to Comberton. The work was carried out under service conditions & proved exceptionally difficult on account of the wooded nature of the country in front c25 04 13

1925 10 16

Speaking at the dance organised by the National Fascisti at Cambridge its President made an appeal for more University members of the party. It was not an organisation of hooligans but advocated that this country should be ruled entirely by those of British birth and British descent and not by aliens. They were not prepared to allow Jews to join. They had the courage of their convictions and were prepared, if necessary, to meet force by force. The dance was an unqualified success. There were close on 300 present c25 10 16

1925 11

Undergraduates take over sale of poppies [38]

1925 11 15

"We the undersigned, convinced that all disputes between nations are capable of settlement by diplomatic negotiation, hereby solemnly declare that we shall refuse to support or render war service to any Government which resorts to arms". The declaration having been signed by members of the University they called a public meeting. The hall was nearly filled with undergraduates but a section of the audience showed their displeasure by continual interruption. Mr G.L. Trevelyan spoke of the horrors to be met in the next war, and was greeted with the remark: "No they will kill us nice and cleanly in the next war" c25 11 15

1926 06 12

Peacemakers pilgrimage to Cambridge - "love, not war", met by Mayor, Mrs Hartree [1.9,1.19]

1926 06 22

One of the contingents of Women Peacemakers who are converging on London from various parts of the country arrived in Cambridge. Meetings had been held in village after village by the side of the war memorials. They were met by members of the local Pilgrimage Committee and proceeded to the Market Hill where an impromptu meeting was held. They carried various banners and red and blue flags. Mrs Rackham said the gathering recalled the great Women's Suffrage Pilgrimage of 1913 when crowds gathered on the same spot. The Pilgrims leave for Saffron Walden tomorrow c26 06 22

1926 06 22

A meeting of the Women's Peacemakers' Pilgrimage was attended by a large audience at Cambridge Guildhall. In the next war they would have aeroplanes dropping poisonous bombs that would destroy civilians who had never been near the firing line. They must create such an atmosphere of repugnance that the nations dare not go to war. There were hundreds of people in Newmarket who were not yet converted to the idea of the League of Nations and it was their duty to make converts of all who had not yet joined them c26 06 22

1926 10 23

OTC range Grange Road closed due to danger to Coton, moves to Coldham's Common [1.10]

1926 10 30

The Officers' Training Corps range on Grange Road, Cambridge, has been closed down, having been condemned by a Military Board on account of the danger to Coton. The Cambridge University Rifle Association will for a time carry on shooting at the Territorial range on Coldham's Common. But there is a likelihood of this range being closed down too in the near future because the new road in course of erection will come up behind the butts. A united effort will be made to secure a sufficiently large area of land for the erection of a new, full-sized range c26 10 30

1927 05 14

Oswald Moseley, MP for Smethwick, jeered at Guildhall meeting. A few years ago he came as a Conservative, now Labour and refused hearing [2.9]



1927 07

Anti-war demonstration Parkers Piece [456.2.7]

1927 11 13

Gloucester Street workshop for disabled soldiers in Cambridge, opened by Princess Mary last year, is represented at an exhibition at the Imperial Institute. Their stall contains all kinds of basketwork, knitting and other things made at the workshops. At present there are eight men working there. All are of over 60 per cent disability through the war, and one is of over 90 per cent. The workshop can never be a paying concern but good work is being done in enabling the men to earn sufficient money to keep them "off the dole". Colonel Willis, the secretary or Miss Brearley, manageress and instructress, would be pleased to see anyone interested. c27 11 13 [4.10]

1927 11 14

Two of the proudest men in Cambridge are Mr H.A. Hagger and Mr F.C. Fuller who were in charge of the stall of the Disabled Men's Workshop, Gloucester Street, at the Imperial Institute. It was the only stall attended by the actual men who made the goods and the contents were completely disposed of by mid-way through the week. The Queen bought a pair of heather-mixture socks and a waste paper basket. The Duchess of York bought a fancy rush stool remarking "It will do for Princess Elizabeth for the nursery". By the time the Prince of Wales visited they had nothing left to sell him. c27 11 14

1928 06 17

There are now 12 men on the books of the Cambridge Disabled Soldiers Workshop in Gloucester Street. Three have had the right arm amputated, seven the leg and of the remaining two one suffered from the effects of gassing and injuries to the head and the other from severe injuries to the abdomen. Half were employed up to the 48-hour week and the maximum wage was 36s a week to the foreman. In addition to the basket and rush work and wool knitting they were developing the knitting of silk stockings, jumpers and ties, the re-upholstering of chairs and the making and renovating of mattresses c28 06 17

1928 06 20

Sir – I happen to live opposite the field-gun in Tenison Road. It is not a relic of the Great War but a captured trophy from the Boer War. To me it represents history and the enormous sacrifices made by the pick of our population. Our war memorials tell our children of a great deliverance. Had we been defeated no doubt we should have had more hideous monuments, probably statues of the Kaiser and the boastful Hindenburg, at which some of the pro-Germans could kneel. Let these small tokens that speak of victory over injustice be preserved for all time – C.J. Challess c28 06 20

1930s

*"Frequent & bitter disagreements within Labour Party over matters such as admission of Community Party members to their meetings, participation in a united socialist campaign against fascism organised in 1930s by now-notorious Communist don, Maurice Dobb & disagreement on Labour's role in WWII, which provoked resignation as parliamentary candidate of universally-respected Alex Wood, a pacifist - who could not support a war government. Although the party majority voted against co-operation with the Communists & in favour of participation in the coalition of 1940-45 large minorities favoured the extremist approach" [7]*

*The fermenting process of Left-wing thought amongst intellectuals gathered in intensity as the apparent national prevarication over Nazidom & Fascism became a matter for disgust ... Moseley in Cambridge ... developing interest in things socialist easily dismissed as the flexings of naive morality among young there were many who meant business ... John Cornford who as undergraduate gathered a band of believers and set out to work positively for the improvement of the conditions of the working class. [2.17]*

*In almost every celebrated spy scandal since the 1950s there has been a thread leading back to 1930's Cambridge. Then, gripped in the gloom of economic depression as the clouds gathered for another war, many thinking people were in ripe mood for questioning the values of capitalism.*

*Fascism was gathering ground under the leadership of Oswald Moseley (who spoke in Cambridge), there were hunger marches and many young men took part in the Spanish Civil War. In such a climate the KGB homed in on Cambridge as a breeding ground for espionage. CEN 23.11.1979*

1930 07 21

The annual 'No More War' meeting of the Cambridge Peace Council was held indoors instead of on Parker's Piece because of heavy rain. But accompanied by the Boys' Brigade Band they proceeded with drenched banners through the rain-swept streets. They met to ensure the catastrophe of 1914 did not occur again. One must remember the menace from the air. It was possible to turn civil aircraft into war craft and chemical factories into works for the manufacture of poison gases and lethal rays. 30 07 21g

1930 08 21

The air exercises have begun and squadrons of fighting planes took off to engage in bitter combat. Until the very last minute of peace 250 aeroplanes were being secretly moved to vulnerable points and the men in command have been planning their attacks. Five night bomber squadrons, nine day bomber squadrons and 11 fighter squadrons will be engaged. Some are fitted with robot controls which can relieve the pilot for extended periods on long flights. 30 08 12

1930 09 27

The Cambridge Disabled Soldiers Workshop in Gloucester Street has made a trading profit for the first time since it opened four years ago. Four of the nine men had returned to their villages for better pay after receiving training in repairs to cane and rush work. They made good quality baskets for laundry and bottles as well as remaking mattresses. Manufactured goods were sold at local fetes and the Exhibition at the Imperial Institute when £300 worth of sales was realised. But the net loss on the running of the institution was £141. 30 09 27b

1931 04 21

Members of the Territorial Army Nursing Service and nurses of Addenbrooke's Hospital receiving instruction in anti-gas drill – photo – 36 04 21

1931 05 22

Dr Alex Wood of Emmanuel College is chairman of the Cambridge Peace Council. He was a Conscientious Objector exempted from active service during the Great War on condition he carried on ambulance work and became commandant of a Red Cross hospital. He joined the Labour Party and in 1926 was elected to Cambridge Borough Council. At the last general election he contested the University seat but was not successful. 31 05 22b

1931 09

First British Legion rally, Parkers Piece [1.20]

1931 11 13

The Poppy Day collection in Cambridge has again smashed all records with undergraduate collectors struggling with money still coming in. Nearly two tons of coppers have passed through their hands. Early in the day the stock of poppies was exhausted and a fresh supply had to be brought in by train. Market Hill was the scene of half-a-dozen well organised 'rags' and at Silver Street the Demon Diver jumped in flames into the river and the collectors drew in good sums for his 'widow' and 'children' 31 11 13 I & j

1932 02

YMCA ban Russian educational exhibition [1.23]

1932 02 15

Of all the memorable gatherings which have been held in the Drill Hall, East Road, none has ever come up to the vast assembly which gathered when the Cambridgeshire Regiment Old Comrades'



Association held its first reunion dinner. When they arrived at Southampton 17 years ago one NCO said: "It's taken three trains to get us here, a carriage will be enough to get us back". That prediction came true! A silent toast was drunk to the 900 officers and men who fell in the Great War. 32 02 15

1932 03 02

The chatter of Lewis guns and the rattle of rifle fire echoed almost continuously over the countryside around the peaceful villages of Bottisham and Quy for almost four hours as members of the Perse, Leys and County School Officers' Training Corps took part in a field day. The first thing inhabitants knew of impending hostilities came when several motor buses disgorged their occupants ready for the fray. Our reporter was fighting his own battle on his bicycle with the wind in an endeavour to get to the battle front before the attack materialised. But the wind won. 32 03 02 & 02a

1932 02 03

Cambridge Young Men's Christian Association cancelled the letting of their hall to an exhibition on education in Soviet Russia. Amongst the exhibits were anti-religious posters which upset several prominent clergymen who wrote to the News protesting. The organisers are looking for another hall so the exhibition can continue. 32 02 03

1932 07 23

John Cornford memorial meeting attended by Communists, socialist, labour, liberals and Bevan – 32 07 23b & c

1932 08 05

Nearly 200 troops arrived at Ely for the voluntary camp of the Cambridgeshire Territorials. On Tuesday they marched to a field on the Littleport Road where the men engaged in machine gun work while trained machine-gunners were taking ranges from the water tower. The men have been accommodated in the old Barracks while the officers' mess has been at the Lamb Hotel where in accordance with the old Militia tradition the band has played outside in the evenings. All the catering has been done with local tradesmen, which has been much appreciated. 32 08 05a

1932 10 26

The Moscow March of young men arrive "dupes of the Communist Party and Moscow agitators" [1.9]

1933 02 18

Moseley to speak at Union [1.14]

1933 01 30

Communist party first meeting – 33 01 30

1933 01 30

Hitler becomes German chancellor – 33 01 30a

1933 03 11

A band of sixty undergraduates marching through Cambridge carrying placards reading 'No More War', 'Scholarships, not Battleships' and 'We want peace'. They raised such re-echoing pacifist shouts that even horses seemed slightly perturbed while people turned round and stared. It was a protest organised by the Students' Anti-War Council. They marched to Parker's Piece where some fine pieces of oratory were heard, but the crowd was not particularly enthusiastic. 33 03 11a

1933 03 21

Willingham peace ballot – 33 03 21

1933 06 16

Community and Labour opinions were so divided at a conference in Burleigh Street that a proposal to form a Cambridge Anti-War Council had to be adjourned after three hours. The University Anti-War Council said workers in Cambridge laboratories had been organised against war. Mrs Foster of the Women's Cop-operative Guild wondered who were being prepared as the next enemy of Britain. It used to be the French, then the defenceless Boers and last of all the Germans. She appealed to women to play their part against the wickedness of war before the catastrophe arrived. 33 06 16 & b

1933 07 12

Dr R.M. Salaman addressed Cambridge Rotary club on the persecution of the Jews in Germany. Hitler was destroying the whole people: it was more serious than the mere 'beating up' of individuals who happened to be Jewish, it was a movement which struck at the very roots of civilisation. Paid advocates of the Nazis had been sent to Palestine and the Ukraine and the doctrine was being taught in schools in the most scandalous way. 33 07 12 p8

1933 07 17

This area will be scene of aerial activity during night exercises by the RAF. Operations will begin between a raiding force of 108 bombers and 152 fighters, some based at Duxford, who will endeavour to intercept and destroy them. They should be off the ground in two minutes, reach an altitude of 1,600 feet in about ten minutes and travel 30 miles. Cambridge itself is off the map as far as actual fighting is concerned as it is supposed to be covered by mountains. 33 07 17

1933 07 26

A meeting of the Cambridge Anti-War Council debated whether to affiliate to the national body. There was a danger that war might appear soon and the workers would be caught as they were in 1914 unless some centralised organisation was set up. But the British Anti-War Movement had been started by Communists with the idea of boring from the inside and they should not join. 33 07 26

1933 08 09

A state of armed neutrality exists on the title 'battlefield' of Woodlands Farm, Ringshall near Stowmarket. Fascists are camped in the farmyard while a bailiff is in possession of two cornfields on the farm. The owner owes £47 to King's College for tithe and fields of wheat and barley have been seized for which tenders have been invited. Police are on constant duty while the fascists watch the approaching roads for signs of approaching cutting machinery. They have chalked messages on the road which read 'Farmers, Unite Now' 33 08 09

1933 10 14

Hitlerism debate at London cancelled, Michael Foot. President of the Oxford Union, was to have disapproved, .T.G.W. Blackwell, Cambridge Union, another speaker [1.12]

1933 10 18

An exhibition of Russian posters organised by the Cambridge branch of the Friends of the Soviet Union was opened at the Labour Hall. Maurice Dobb explained that very simple and forceful ideas were combined with a striking use of colour to appeal to the worker and 'activate' him or try to convince the peasants to join community farms run on a co-operative basis. The posters gave some idea of the life of the workers, contrasting the old conditions with the new. 33 10 18

1933 11 02

Photographs taken during a holiday in Russia are displayed at Ramsey and Muspratt studio in Post Office Terrace. Two studies, 'Dneiprastron: the new town' and 'Moscow: the Kremlin' show there is beauty in the new and old. The human side is captured in a fine study of the 'Intourist' bus driver and a Young Pioneers' demonstration while 'The Infants School' shows the Russian child. 'Prison Settlement', is a photo of another aspect of Russian life 33 11 02

1933 11 03

Socialist Society & Student Christian Movement organise demonstration & march from Parkers Piece to war memorial; counter demonstration of flour & white- features ... desecrating a holy day call for - abolition of bombing from air [1.6]

1933 11 06

Bonfire night demonstration & Hitler Nazi meeting – 33 11 06

1933 11 09

An inaugural meeting of the New Britain Movement was held in the Dorothy Café with Mr A Mackay in the chair. There should be a federation of European states: every day the world became more international and a policy of isolation would be disastrous. Communism and Fascism were threatening the world and England must show the rest the way out of the mess, speakers said. The power to issue money should be taken away from the financiers, only then would people receive enough to live on.

33 11 09

1933 11 10

The film 'Our Fighting Navy' has been withdrawn from the Tivoli Cinema following lively scenes. Fifty members of the Students' Anti-War went to make a protest but a rival party, numbering about a thousand undergraduates, marched to the cinema with two bands playing war-time songs and carrying Union Jacks. Several tried to push their way in until the arrival of four policemen who, with drawn truncheons, managed to keep the crowd at bay whilst a dozen more raced to the scene in motor vehicles. Cries of 'Down with Hitler' and 'Hail Hitler' were heard above the general uproar and a stink bomb let off in the vestibule 33 11 10, 33 11 11 [1.7, 1.13]

1933 11 14

Memories and reminders of the horror of war are provided by the Cambridge Anti-War Council's exhibition opened. It consists of diagrams, photographs and cartoons and if anybody wants war after seeing them, they can have no feeling. Some of the photos of the dead were forbidden by the Censors and it is easy to see why. Part has been prepared by members of the Bio-chemical Board, Cavendish Laboratories and shows the effects of gas 33 11 14

1933 11 18

Anti-war meetings and views – 33 11 18

1934 02 17

Eighteen 'Blackshirts' were arrested on farms at Wortham, Suffolk by 50 police who arrived in large double-decker motor buses. The 'Blackshirts' were outside the farm gates and were arrested peacefully without any resistance. They have been at the farm for several days 'guarding' cattle and sheep which were impounded for tithe and a crowd of spectators cheered them as they left. Other Fascists were instructed to withdraw from a farm at Diss where their steel-protected cars have been keeping a watch-out for a van expected to remove animals 34 02 17 34 02 20 34 02 21 trial – 34 02 26

1934 02 19

Cambridge showed little interest in the 100 hunger marchers who arrived from Huntingdon. They halted at Girton College where jugs of tea and buns were given. About 200 people including members of the University Socialist Society and Anti War Movement escorted them into town. Darkness was falling as a rally was held on Parker's Piece where a small crowd gathered before they made their way to the Corn Exchange where they spent the night. But police were accused of provocation when they forcibly expelled them on Monday morning. Guy Burgess amongst group undergraduates who march with them through town, undergraduates provide food. Cultured newspapers ignore them, gutter Press calls them 'mob of Red dupes whose leaders are paid weekly in Moscow gold' Marxist library & bookstall established at Girton College 34 02 19 34 02 26

1934 03 29

“War is madness and we are being driven to it by madmen” a peace meeting at Soham was told. Some scientists were now saying there was no serious danger from gas warfare and people would be safe if they went and sat quietly in the bath. But soldiers who had been trained to combat mustard gas had become casualties without knowing they were affected until it was too late. They were being driven into this madness by men who were so stupid that they were virtually insane and they needed missionaries against war to defeat them. To believe anything these days involved a belief in miracles. 34 03 29

1934 04 12

Herr Gerhart Seger, who recently escaped from a German concentration camp told of his experiences. Under Hitler’s ‘Protection Arrest’ men could be taken to prison with no reason. The Storm-Troopers, sadistic and brutalised men, could do what they would with inmates. Prisoners were beaten mercilessly, slept crowded together in damp ice-cold cellars and listened to men being tortured by the Nazis. Of 42 men imprisoned with him, two were beaten to death within a fortnight. After he’d come to England his wife and baby had been taken to a concentration camp as hostages, not to be released until he returned. 34 04 12

1934 04 27

Anti-war ballot [1.3]

1934 05 26

Sir – we scientific workers and teachers of the University wish to affirm our fundamental opposition to the use of scientific research in war and the preparation of war. A situation may soon arise when scientists will be pressured to engage in research directed to the purpose of war Signed: Joseph Needham (Biochemist), E.O. Whetham (Agriculture), Marjory Stephenson (Biochemistry), M.L. Oliphant, C.P. Snow, B.M. Crowther and Alex Wood (Physics) and others 34 05 26

1934 11 10

Poppy Day collectors had to contend with a dismal downpour of rain. But a large crowd gathered on Senate House Hill to await the arrival of a self-styled ‘Hitler’ who was due to open the Caius Fun Fair. When he did come, by car, he brought a procession of about a dozen cars in his wake, all containing weird and wonderful characters. The obstinate mule, which last year lay down in the road and refused to get up until tempted by a coin, was less obstinate on the present occasion, for the wet and muddy road was hardly a pleasant bed. 34 11 10 & a

1934 11 12

Several hundred people joined in a peace meeting on Parker’s Piece organised by the Cambridge Anti-War Council and the University Anti-War Movement before marching in a torchlight procession to the War Memorial. The procession, some 300 strong began their march along Mill Road, increasing in size as it went along. But they missed the turning into Tenison Road and crossed Mill Road Bridge before winding its way round the back streets to the War Memorial. They laid a wreath ‘To those of all countries who fell in the last war from those who are pledged to prevent another’ 34 11 12c

1934 11 12

Wesley Church memorial Cambridge Brotherhood WWI 34 11 12d

1934 11 17

Sensational revelations concerning Germany’s war plans were made at a meeting in Cambridge Guildhall. Speaking to the University League of Nations Union, Mr Wickham Steed, a former editor of The Times, said they had imported enough arsenic ore to make poison gas sufficient to swamp Europe twice over. The next war is likely to come without warning and many be commenced by an overwhelming night attack. General Goering, at the Nazi Air Ministry has built 85 underground aerodromes this year and had at least 2,000 aeroplanes, he claimed. 34 11 17 & a

1934 11 23

Anti-war exhibition [1.4]

1934 12 04

Lord Rutherford presided at the first meeting of Cambridge University Democratic Movement. There is a great fear of the power of military aeroplanes making a sudden and devastating attack on defenceless cities involving the destruction of combatant and civilian alike. Air warfare of any kind should be abolished, he urged. Vyvian Adams praised his work at the Cavendish Laboratory. None could hope to isolate himself from the surrounding dangers. The question was did we want human development or human destruction by scientific means. 34 12 04

1935 02 02

Lord Eltisley spoke of the record of the National Government. If the Socialists had remained in office we should have been in a state of chaos. We required a stable, strong and safe Government and in Stanley Baldwin had a leader in the best tradition of British statesmanship. Signs were not lacking that storms were blowing up and we might again be approaching a crucial period. In Germany young people were being brought up in a creed of glorification of arms. Now they had order 12 new submarines. Our best defence was to be prepared against sudden attack 35 02 02 &

1935 02 21

Hugh Dalton on fascism – 35 02 21

1935 02 25

An open-air demonstration under the red flag against the new Unemployment Bill was held on Parker's Piece supported by the University Socialist Society and Labour Clubs. A crowd of nearly 100 assembled. There are two-and-a-half million registered unemployed but there had been an increase in production without an increase in wages. The worker had become the slave of the machine, not the machine the tool of the worker. Mr H.C. Bibby spoke on camps for the unemployed: many who took part had the best of motives but they could develop into terrible concentration camps. 35 02 25

1935 03 01

Peace ballot - "county is peace-minded" [1.1]

1935 03 07

The Cambridge Scientists' Anti-War Group heard an address on aspects of the Nazi movement. Many of the true facts were to be found in reports circulated secretly by the Ruhr industrialists who were providing the Nazis with immense financial support. German science was being devoted almost exclusively to war preparations. At the end the Group protested against increased expenditure on armaments by the British Government and urged the money to be spent on the social services instead. Peace cannot be maintained by building greater armed forces. 35 03 07d

1935 03 07

Police guarded the closed gates of the University Arms Hotel while Sir Oswald Mosley was at a dinner organised by the University Fascist Society. Outside a meeting organised by the University Socialist Society was held on Parker's Piece with speeches by John Cornford, Maurice Cornford and Maurice Dobb. Then a torchlight procession by 200 undergraduates shouting anti-Fascist slogans such as 'We want Mosley dead or alive' and singing 'The Internationale' marched to Peas Hill where more speeches were made before a Proctor arrived and they dispersed. 35 03 07c. Mosley previous visits – 35 02 23a

1935 04 04

There is no doubt the Peace Ballot has made Cambridge people face the vital questions. Results show nearly all wanted Britain to remain a member of the League of Nations and an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement. The manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit

should also be prohibited. If a nation insisted on attacking another the others should compel it to stop by economic measures or, if necessary, by force under the auspices of the League and preferably by an International Police Force. 35 04 04 [1.1]

1935 04 08

Residents need not be alarmed by the appearance of heavy bomber aeroplanes during the next few nights. A tactical exercise will involve bombers flying a series of 'co-ordinated attacks' on selected military targets to introduce new crews to the role of the night bomber. It will provide actual practice in extended navigation and the technique of bombing by night, the co-ordination of raids and the employment of the signals organisation. But there will be no 'bombing' in this neighbourhood and no explosive bombs will be dropped anywhere. It is essential these exercises should be carried out during the hours of darkness and the Air Ministry is to restrict night flying to the minimum possible. 35 04 08

1935 04 23

Sir – this country has not produced a mask to safeguard us against an attack of modern gas. For two years I have worked in the anti-war movement I founded in a room in Cambridge to protest against war-like manoeuvres and to organise against war. It is the workers who are called upon to fight, to make munitions and pay for it afterwards and trade unionists should take the lead in opposing it. – W.G. Doel, Hope Street, Cambridge – 35 04 23

1935 04 29

Anti-Nazi play at Festival Theatre – photo – 35 04 29a

1935 05 28

Dr Wooster of the Scientists' Anti-War Committee said the proposed air-raid drills would be compulsory, getting civilians under war discipline and squashing anti-war activities. It was impossible to protect the population at large against air attack: we might conceivably protect the inhabitants of Haverhill by building shelters but not the whole of London. The Government would not supply gas masks, you must buy them for yourselves; they would cost about £20 and it was obvious that poor people could not afford it, he told a meeting in the Labour Hall, Norfolk Street. 35 05 28

1935 10 18

Controversy surrounded the offer of £10,000 from Sir John Davenport Siddeley for developing aeronautical research in the University. Some dons felt it would subsidise research of a military character of pecuniary value to armament manufacturers. But others say the ultimate influence of the aeroplane upon civilisation will be pacific rather than warlike. It was abhorrent that the University should become a centre of specifically military research but this money would be used for work of a fundamental and non-military character 35 10 18b

1935 11 05

A 'Fascism and War' exhibition organised by the Cambridge Anti-War Council discloses methods by which the illegal opposition movements in Germany and Italy distribute their literature disguised as items of a non-political nature. There is also propaganda printed on paper of tissue thinness and a method of photographing illegal printed matter and transposing it on paper which instantly goes black on exposure to light if opened by the police. The recipient knows to treat the paper chemically to counteract the effect. Also on display is also one of the Anti-Nazi leaflets spilled from the roof garden of a Berlin restaurant on to the streets below and a collection of abusive correspondence, including one from Ezra Pound, sent from Italy to a Fellow of King's College after he contributed certain views in an English paper 35 11 05 & a

1935 11 15

Peace-Week torchlight procession [1.2]



1935 11 26

Cambridge Disabled Soldiers' Workshop had been through a difficult period. They had to change their address three times which involved considerable expense. The largest number of men in the workshop was 12 and at present there were only seven, none of which were complete in their bodies. One had lost his leg in the South African War. The shop in Trumpington Street was not in so good a situation as at Peas Hill and they did not get the streams of passing undergraduates. We should never forget the men who had served, suffered and saved our country through its years of dire peril. 35 11 26

1935 12 12

Dr William Wooster told the court he was a member of the Scientists' Anti-War Group and had been standing outside Duxford Aerodrome selling pamphlets entitled 'Air Display Special'. It carried a headnote to say it was not to be sold to members of H.M. Forces but they were seized by police under the Incitement to Disaffection Act. Surely people could be reminded of the sheer horrors of the Great War 35 12 12 & a

1935 12 20

The judge agreed that police had been wrong to seize copies of a pamphlet from a member of the Cambridge Scientist's Anti-War Group at Duxford aerodrome during the Royal Review. They'd been worried following an earlier incident at Mildenhall when a misguided female threw a paper at the King's car. 'The Anti-War Special' was crude, inartistic and in some respects childish. It had been sold by Dr Wooster supported by a bevy of satellites, mainly ladies, wearing badges of a reddish hue. Various ex-servicemen had expressed themselves in vituperative terms and its distribution might have led to a breach of the peace 35 12 20 & a

1936 03 07

Ugly scenes were witnessed at a demonstration organised by the University Socialist Club and Anti-War Council at the Guildhall which was addressed by Aneurin Bevan. There was vocal opposition from the gallery with fighting and at one juncture all the doors were opened wide because of a strong offensive smell. Earlier 500 undergraduates took part in a torchlight procession headed by the red banner of the University Anti-War Movement shouting "We want peace" and "Stanley Baldwin must be sacked" 36 03 07 & a

1936 03 12

"Is any treaty made with Germany more than a piece of paper" asked Sir Austen Chamberlain when he reviewed Germany's action over the demilitarised zone in a speech he made at the annual dinner of the Cambridge University Conservative Association. The Association was flourishing and its numbers and activities greater than ever. There were a disproportionate number of Oxford men in the House of Commons but the Cambridge men made up in quality what they lacked in numbers. However there was a slackness in the Conservative Party which had no counterpart among the Socialists. 36 03 12, a

1936 04 27

Territorial soldiers with machine guns at anti-aircraft exercises on Coldham's common – 36 04 27d

1936 05 04

"I am not at all sure that if I had been a German I should not have voted freely and enthusiastically for Hitler at the last election", Dr Alex Wood told a May Day demonstration on Parker's Piece. Germany as she was today was the creation of the Allied Governments and their policy of repress and unilateral disarmament, he continued before condemning the Government's re-armament policy. It would lead inevitably to war. Only on the foundations of International Socialism and co-operation can secure peace be built. 36 05 04b

1936 05 15

Cambridgeshire Regiment, Major Digby takes command, is University correspondent of CDN specialising in sport and drama – 36 05 15c & d

1936 07 29

The Fellowship of Reconciliation, a peace movement born in Cambridge during the dark days of 1914 was founded by people united in the conviction that the way of war could not be the way of Christ for righting wrongs and had now spread to many countries. Some 250 people from Germany, France, Italy, Bulgaria and Belgium together with the USA, Japan and the Argentine are attending a conference at Selwyn College on 'Christ: the Peace of the World'. 36 07 29b

1936 08 28

Cambridge meeting on Spain & Fascists – 36 08 28

1936 10 12

Over £120 was collected for the Spanish Medical Aid Committee at a meeting in the Guildhall. If they went to Spain today they would find village after village barricaded. Many people were being killed because they have nothing but their bare bodies to put against the latest legal death which modern science has given to the rebels, the Fascist International, to destroy decency in life in Spain today, Mr J. Langdon-Davies claimed. 36 10 12

1936 10 13

Precautions to be taken in preparation for air raids were outlined to a meeting of architects, officials, school managers and owners of shops at Cambridge Guildhall. They hoped the dangers would never come to pass but must provide for contingencies. The three main weapons would be the incendiary, gas and high-explosive bombs. The first was the greatest danger. It would burn for seven minutes and could not be put out by water or any known chemical. Food exposed to gas vapour should be thrown away. Respirators would be issued to everyone except tiny children 36 10 13

1936 10 21

A.J. Winship told Rotarians he had visited Germany. The Germans had no more idea of attacking this country than the man in the moon. The attitude to Hitler seemed uniform all over the country. They worshipped him. He was the first real ruler who was absolutely unselfish and sought nothing for himself. He had taken power but was not a dictator. He held a position almost the same as the King did here. But Rotarian Franklin disagreed: Hitler was a dictator who had assumed power by force and murder and the treatment being given to the Jews was diabolical. 36 10 21

1936 11 02

Undergraduates demonstrated support for 130 hunger marchers from Durham on their way to London to protest against the Means Test and new scales of benefit. At Girton College girl students served them tea and buns before 250 undergraduates joined the procession carrying torches and banners. There were meetings in the Co-operative and Labour Halls before the protestors had an evening meal in the students' rooms. At Cheshunt College some of the marchers ate in hall. Having slept in the Corn Exchange they continued to Saffron Walden where the Labour Party entertained them with lively tunes from a loudspeaker van. The march is due to arrive in London next weekend. 36 11 02 & a 1936 10 31

1936 11 06

CU branch Fascists dinner, heavy police guard, November [1.4]

1936 11 07

Cambridge Peace Week, 14 organisations unite [1.15]

1936 11 27

The Territorial Army recruiting campaign at the Drill Hall attracted a large number of people including employers of labour, members of the University O.T.C. and boys from the Perse and County schools. The progress of aircraft means that the channel is now a mere ditch over which planes can fly in a few minutes and a defence force must be efficient. This should be voluntary and

employers must make some sacrifices and encourage their men to join the Territorial Army, giving them leave and pay when on service. 36 11 27

1936 12 03

Air raid precautions were discussed by South Cambs RDC. The roads and bridges about to be built in the county should have bomb-proof surfaces. Substantial material was to be used and it would not be at all impossible to make them bombproof. Most of the roads were to be constructed above the present ground level and could have shelters under them 36 12 03a

1937 01 11

At the first open meeting of the Cambridge Left Book Club tribute was paid to the memory of Mr G.C. Maclaurin, who was killed recently fighting for the Spanish Government in Madrid. He, more than anybody, was responsible for the flourishing members of the club in Cambridge where some 400 of the total membership of 35,000 are resident. The speaker discussed 'Must Capitalism Fail?' In a Socialist society, such as the USSR, all the sources of production were utilised to the full. While Russian workers were enjoying the fruits of their labour, the capitalist workers were saddled with debt. 37 01 11

1937 02 03

The death of John Cornford while fighting for the Spanish Government is a grievous loss. He had a brilliant academic career and was preparing for research work in history when the Spanish rebellion broke out. As soon as it was known that Italian war planes were being delivered to the Spanish rebels he went out as a volunteer, joining the British section of the International Brigade and fighting alongside G.C. Maclaurin of Cambridge who was killed in Madrid. He saw continual fighting for five weeks and was commander of the British section on the Cordova front when he was killed reconnoitring in advance of the lines. 37 02 03

1937 02 13

Cambridge Scientists' Anti-War Group, a technical and advisory body to Peace Movements, has issued a booklet entitled 'The Protection of the Public from Aerial Attack. It is a critical examination of the recommendations put forward by the Home Office Air Raids Precautions Department. They constructed 'gas proof' rooms according to Government plans and measured its resistance to the entry of air from outside. Much of the information is technical with a separate chapter devoted to the protection of children 37 02 13a [1.21]

1937 03 23

Cambridge Scientists have challenged Government claims that the majority of London houses could construct a gas-proof room. They say it would need to be lined with sheet tin and the joints overlapped with Vaseline. Even so tear gas could get in. Mustard gas could be spread in liquid form from aeroplanes as had been done in Abyssinia. It gave off a vapour so toxic it was lethal if breathed for six minutes. Government-issue gas masks would cost two-and-sixpence each but would not stop cigarette smoke that could make people cough and be sick. 37 03 23a & b

1937 04 17

Red Cross members will be trained in air raid precautions and encouraged to volunteer for ARP services. They could be assured that people wearing masks would be unaffected by gas, despite a recent study by Cambridge Scientists. Diffusion of elementary knowledge would prevent many casualties caused by panic. They had held six 'gas courses' attracting 350 people. But these numbers would be hopelessly inadequate to deal with a large-scale air raid. 37 04 17

1937 04 27

Basque town wiped out, hundreds killed – 37 04 27

1937 04 28

Cambridge Union Society emulated the Oxford refusal to fight for king and country by carrying a motion in favour of complete national disarmament and individual refusal to bear arms. If re-armament were abandoned in the pursuit of peace our economic system would collapse and we would be faced with a military revolution of the property classes on the lines of General Franco. It might involve us in civil war – unless passive resistance was practiced as it had been by Gandhi, opponents warned. 'Refuse to fight for any other nation in any war ... shall always be prepared to die if need be for King & Country but for nobody and nothing else' but soon concerned that neighbours fowls being eaten that ours are safe 37 04 28 & a

1937 05 03

Labour Party's May Day demonstration on Parker's Piece, 500 marches – 37 05 03a & b

1937 05 20

Sir - What we have come to know as the Cambridge War Memorial was part of a three-fold memorial scheme which embraced a substantial grant to Addenbrooke's Hospital for extension work, a complete record in Ely Cathedral of the names of local men killed in the war or who died from wounds and the monument at the junction of Station Road. This was to commemorate all Cambridgeshire infantry and should be 'To Victory'. It was not to be a memorial to the dead but to the living. It is for this reason that we who pass the memorial do not lift our hats as we do at the Cenotaph in London – E.W.R. 37 05 20

1937 05 29

Within the next few weeks about thirty Basque children brought to England following the terrible air raids at Bilbao and Gernika will be arriving in Cambridge. They will be taken to Pampisford Vicarage where the children will remain for at least six months being looked after by volunteers from the University. As they are destitute provisions must be made for their welfare and beds, boots and clothes are required. 37 05 29

1937 05 31

About 2,000 people gathered on Grange Road Rifle Range to see a display of first aid by the British Red Cross Society under air raid conditions. Three bombers from Duxford took part in the raid, exactly as though on active service. As they dived at speeds of 240 mph there were realistic bangs and clouds of smoke. People in the area rushed about screaming and collapsed wounded or from the effects of the gas. When the raid was over the rescue parties, clad in gas masks and decontamination suits commenced work. A musketry party fired on the 'planes during the raid 37 05 31

1937 06 09

A meeting at Cambridge Guildhall to raise funds for the Basque children's hostel at Pampisford brought several promises of 'adopting' children by guaranteeing fifteen shillings a week. There will be 29 young refugees at Pampisford Vicarage and volunteers were needed to do cleaning, carpentry and plumbing. Leah Manning described the terrible tragedy of Guernica and the conditions in Bilbao where everyone from the President to the poorest refugee had only black bread, coarse cabbage and a little rice to eat. 37 06 09a & b 37 06 12a

1937 06 23

Sir - The 29 Basque refugee children are now settled in the Vicarage at Pampisford after their ordeal in Spain. There have been heavy initial expenses in creating a home in an unfurnished house not designed for the purpose and insufficiently provided with sanitation. Several firms have supplied goods free or at cost prices and individuals have given their labour in repairing, paintings and cleaning the Vicarage. We hope to employ a cook-housekeeper and charwoman as well as a part-time gardener to grow vegetables for the winter – F.M. Cornford. 37 06 23

1937 06 30

The Nazi salute was given as German ex-prisoners of war honoured Cambridge's war dead. Members of the Reichsvereinigung Ehem from Kriegsgefangener marched to the memorial where the ranks of local British Legion standard bearers were joined by the German standard-bearer, carrying the Nazi flag. While standards were dipped, one of the visitors placed a laurel wreath on the memorial as members of the German party gave the Nazi salute. They then left for a civic reception at the Guildhall. 37 06 30 & a & b

1937 07 16

An 18-foot long scale model of H.M.S. Repulse was exhibited on Cambridge Market Square to stimulate recruiting and advertise Navy Week. It is fitted with electric search-lights and Morse lamps and illuminated by powerful lamps from the Vauxhall lorry that tows it. Extensive alterations have been made to the upper deck of the ship since the model was first made and these have been effected on the model which was originally constructed at Portsmouth docks for instructional purposes. 37 07 16a

1937 07 23

John Cornford memorial meeting attended by Communists, socialist, labour, liberals and Bevan – 32 07 23b & c

1937 08 09

An air "attack" is being made on London by 176 light and medium heavy bombers. All through the night they will concentrate their efforts to 'destroy' the capital and opposed to them will be 19 fighter squadrons with a total strength of 222 machines. The 'attack' will continue two more nights unless affected by bad weather. The main object of the exercise is to provide tactical training for the RAF in conjunction with the Anti-Aircraft Division of the Territorial Army and Observer Corps. 'Casualties' will not be assessed 37 08 09

1937 08 20

Sir – London newspapers, suffering from a scarcity of news, have reported unruly behaviour by 18 of the 3,826 Basque refugees in England. Picture 4,000 children from English towns, their nerves wrecked by months of war and air raids, many of them having lost their parents, transported to a strange climate, strange customs and an unknown tongue. Would they all be angels? The refugees at Pampisford have been happy and untroubled. But now we have been asked to take another 30. The great difficulty is to find an empty house large enough. Can readers help? - F.L. Lucas. King's College 37 08 20a

1937 08 24

Tanks prepare for manoeuvre, Linton - photo – 37 08 24

1937 08 25

An attempt by an insurgent force to cut the railway at Bartlow Station saw rifle battalions attack on a wide front. A small British machine gun battalion took up a position on the west bank of the River Stour while soldiers demolished bridges to prevent the attackers occupying the high ground at Shudy Camps and Horseheath. Villagers had a fine time watching the ponderous tanks pass by and comparing them with the guns and beautiful horses of the 1912 manoeuvres. It was part of the military exercise simulating that in Egypt before the latest Anglo-Egyptian treaty. 37 08 25

1937 08 27

Tanks featured in the opening attack on Haverhill under cover of a smoke screen. An assault via the Bumpsteads was held up and the advance swung westwards past Shudy Camps towards the Bartlow railway. Late in the afternoon an enveloping movement was successful. Street fighting and sniping was expected and the infantry was served out with an extra supply of hand grenades. The inhabitants thronged the centre of Haverhill eager to see the activity of the military manoeuvres 37 08 27a



1937 08 31

The premise behind the military manoeuvres was that production of a new lethal gas was about to start in two underground factories at Yole and Barsey Farm near Balsham and Shudy Camps. Different essentials of the gas were to be made at each factory so destruction of either would prevent production. There was a large influx of visitors to the church parade at Shudy Camps Park where 400 men from various regiments had assembled for the training exercise. Afterwards a band concert was greatly enjoyed. 37 08 31

1937 09 04

The Army manoeuvres now taking place locally should have a beneficial effect on recruiting. The introduction of the motor into all branches of the service has rendered the soldier's task much less toilsome and robbed the march of its old-time discomforts. The present-day Tommy is better provided for and looked after, better fed and more comfortably clothed. Recruits for the three battalions of the 5th Infantry Brigade now in camp at Shudy Camps Park are coming in steadily. It is expected that a further 100 will soon be ready at Aldershot and will probably also be sent there 37 09 04b

1937 09 07

Basque children at Pampisford rectory visited by Dr L. Cobbett – 37 09 07

1937 09 16

War will be declared at midnight on Saturday – at any rate for the purpose of manoeuvres – and Ely will be in the war zone. 450 men from Liverpool, Manchester and London arrived in the city and went into camp at Barton Fields, arousing the curiosity of residents who have visited in large numbers and showed considerable interest in the military activities. It is the largest exercise of its kind since 1918 but the only troops are members of the Royal Signals Supplementary Reserve; most are Post Office employees who give up their spare time so they could assist the Regular Army in the event of conflict 37 09 16

1937 10 03

The 1st Battalion of the Cambridgeshire Regiment lined up on Parker's Piece for their first inspection since they were reformed after the war. Behind them hundreds of Old Comrades also paraded. It is a Volunteer Army undertaking onerous duties and alone stands between us and conscription. With no prospect of war for some years the Government has taken very little interest in either the Regular or Territorial Army but times have changed as a result of the combined efforts of Hitler, Mussolini and now the Japs, they were told. Men, women and children are regarded as suitable subjects for attack by shell and bomb and we must defend ourselves, they were told. 37 10 03b & c

1937 10 12

Basque arts and crafts - photo – 37 10 12

1937 10 13

Sir – since the beginning of the Spanish Civil War four Cambridge men have laid down their lives fighting against the Fascist Insurgents. They are John Cornford (Trinity), G.C. Maclaurin (St John's), G. Lorimer Birch (Caius) and Julian Bell (King's). The first three were in the International Column, the fourth as an ambulance driver. Now a branch of the Voluntary Industrial Aid Organisation has been established to recondition motor vehicles as ambulances for Spain. Side-car ambulances are needed that can go up the hills through narrow passes; at present wounded have to be transported by mules. Donations should be sent to me – Joseph Needham, Caius College 37 10 13

1937 10 18

Cambridge University Officers Training Corps gave a demonstration at the Grange Road rifle range. It opened with a display by the Vickers machine gun section followed by mortars laying a smoke screen. Cavalry were in action reconnoitring and dummy-thrusting with swords while communication by wireless and cable was also shown. A spectacular display of demolishing a bridge was followed by



a battery action by two 18-pounder field guns. Visitors could inspect the equipment and try out an army gas mask in the gas chamber. 37 10 18

1937 10 19

Major-General Ernst Udet, ace pilot during the war, was amongst top German airmen who inspected two squadrons of giant Heyford bombers and the latest Battle Bristol-Blenheims, Harrow, Wellesey and Whitley aircraft at R.A.F. Mildenhall. They went into the body of the Harrow plane and three sat in the cockpit of one of the others before watching the engines starting. The visitors, some carrying small dress daggers, also toured the station buildings including the mobile wireless transmitting, photographic and automatic control sections. 37 10 19 & a

1937 10 19

The Mayor opened a model anti-gas room at Boot's shop in Petty Cury. With the disturbed state of international politics the company was anxious to help people to retain a sense of proportion concerning air raids. Any room could be made gasproof at a trifling cost. It had been tested under the most severe conditions with war gas. The Home Office Air Raids Precautions Department welcomed the initiative. If people took the simple precautions suggested they would be able to deal with the emergency quite successfully. 37 10 19b

1937 10 23

Great deal of war talk - Cartoon – 37 10 23c

1937 10 23

A new novel deals with the Cambridge of the future. "Thirty Million Gas Masks" by Sarah Campion imagines 'Something like ten thousand Cantabrigians were wiped out (as every schoolboy knows) in the Air Raid of 1939. There are memorials to the Cambridge dead all over the rest of Great Britain. The enemy cared not two buttons about Cambridge but were aiming at London'. In the book a technical mishap on one of the bombing planes releases a new gas which results in the area being evacuated only to be visited by people in gas masks sent by the Government to test the poison-laden country. 37 10 23 c d e

1937 11 11

Cambridge Labour Party women's section heard that the Government was preparing for war and was not going to spend money on decent houses for its citizens to live in. Gas masks for 'essential' people were available at £1 and ten-and-six each, but for the masses at two shillings and nine pence. They should press for equality for rich and poor alike; gas masks should be efficient and not merely 'eye-wash' to prevent a panic. To capitalist interest war meant vast profits and hard cash. 37 11 11d

1937 11 15

Cambridge Peace Week ends with march from Parkers Piece to War Memorial – 37 11 15a & b

1938 01 11

Mr W. King showed three of his films. One showing the inspection of the Cambridgeshire Regiment by General Kirke caught the spectacle admirably: the marching of the Territorials was transferred to the screen in colour and many town and county notabilities were seen.. 38 01 11a

1938 01 20

The hostel for Basque children have had to leave Pampisford and experienced great difficulty in finding a suitable house large enough to take all the children. Now they have moved to Salisbury Villas, Station Road 30 01 20c

1938 01 20

Anti-Japanese demonstration – photo – 38 01 20

1938 01 28

Lieut-Col C.R. Bennett retired after 20 years with the Territorial Army. After service in the First World War he was given command of the 250th Field Company and established its headquarters in Cambridge in 1934. This was the first year of partial mechanisation leading to the loss of all horses and the extra work they made. Parades were less spectacular but were less dangerous to unwary recruits and allowed more training of a strictly engineering nature. His popularity with the troops even survived the task of judging the inter-company tug-of-war which looms very large in importance to the units 38 01 28

1938 03 10

Red Cross to plan demonstration of Air Raids Precautions work; in event of war a war hospital was to be established near Cambridge – 38 03 10

1938 03 19

Cambridge Spanish refugee relief organisation had transformed Pampisford Vicarage, which had been practically derelict. Twenty-nine Basque children had arrived on 19th June 1937, the youngest aged seven, all fresh from their tragic experiences. The Hostel had moved in January to No.1 Salisbury Villas. The children had all lost one parent and to send them back would be cruelty; they did not know where some of their guardians were and one lad would face the firing squad if he returned. But if donations were not forthcoming, they would soon run out of funds. 38 03 19e

1938 04 02

Parliament has decided that local authorities must prepare schemes for safeguarding the population against attack from the air. This does not mean war is imminent, but the risk cannot be ignored. Large numbers of volunteers are needed; men as air raid wardens, demolition workers, auxiliary firemen and messengers, women for first-aid, gas contamination and ambulance duties. The Mayor (Coun. Peck) appealed for people to come forward and say what they can do 38 04 02

1938 04 08

Miss D.I. Macdonald, who lives in Sherlock Road, has recently returned from Spain where she was caught in air raids. "There is nothing you can do except sit still and I was frightened because I felt completely trapped". The universities were picked out specifically as targets by the attackers who feared the people in them. Government suggestions that covered-in trenches should be constructed in the gardens of houses here are very sensible; the great thing is to have covered protection against splinters and machine gun bullets. In Spain they were not unsightly as flower beds have been planted on top of them. . 38 04 08

1938 04 11

The First Eastern General Hospital is to be revived as part of a War Office plan. The site has not been officially approved but will not be far from Cambridge. It would have 600 beds on mobilisation, possibly expanding to 1,200. There will be a permanent staff of three officers and 24 other ranks with 19 medical officers, a matron and 49 nursing sisters. On mobilisation the staff will be increased by other ranks largely composed of V.A.D. men and women. They hoped it would never be called into action, but they must be prepared, ex-servicemen were told. 38 04 11a & b

1938 04 21

Cambridge is to be the subject of an 'air raid' on July 14th. It is actually an ARP demonstration which will take place on Midsummer Common which is to be laid-out in the form of a street and made as realistic as possible. The scenario is that several squadrons of enemy aircraft fly over en route to Birmingham but are turned back and unload their bombs over Cambridge after they are attacked by aeroplanes from Duxford. The whole of the enemy machines are destroyed. Meanwhile the Mayor of St Ives, Mr D. Bryant, has built an air-raid shelter in his garden with the help of his sons. The first in the town, he is giving his townspeople a lead. 38 04 21 38 04 22a

1938 04 30

Air Raid Precaution plans contemplate the division of Cambridge into three main areas each of which could be operated separately in the event of communication being destroyed in an air raid on one or more of the river or railway bridges.. The total personnel required should be not less than 3,300 with street wardens dealing with about 500 people. The existing staff of the Corporation, Water, Gas and Electricity companies will form a strong nucleus of the personnel required and are being trained in anti-gas measures. There will have to be co-operation between the Borough and County to give mutual assistance in case of need 38 04 30b

1938 05 03

Cambridge's air raid precautions are taking shape with council workers and college staff being trained in anti-gas measures and first aid. But volunteers were needed for decontamination, rescue and demolition work and 100 messengers, ambulance drivers and despatch riders were wanted. Cherry Hinton Hall would be an important centre for training and, if necessary, for a first-aid station. The greatest danger in air raids came from high explosive bombs but nothing was included about underground shelters. The Government said there is no precaution against bombing; it was the council's duty to look after the injured and see damaged buildings were taken down properly. 38 05 03 & a

1938 05 07

In Cambridgeshire villages 700 air raid wardens had been appointed and 251 trained in simple elementary gas precautions. Each resident would be measured for respirators of which there were three sizes. There would be five or six centres with mobile apparatus and men trained to render first-aid, repair bridges and do decontamination work. The rural area was regarded as one of the least vulnerable but Cambridge was one of the most attractive spots for airmen in the world 38 05 07

1938 06 08

During an air raid the children attending infants' and junior schools should disperse to their homes, the Air Raid Precautions Committee was told. The responsibility of keeping children at school was great. Mothers would certainly come for them. 38 06 08c

1938 06 11

A report on A.R.P. progress in Cambridgeshire says 1,100 air raid wardens have been appointed with 235 trained in anti-gas precautions. Respirators will be stored but not assembled and distributed to each village until the emergency arises. A number of buildings have been inspected as first air posts to be manned by volunteers trained in decontamination and dealing with gas affected cases. There will be mobile parties able to rescue people from damaged buildings. 38 06 11

1938 06 24

The new Cambridge Guildhall basement could be regarded as splinter-proof and it would not be difficult to render it gas-resisting, the Air Raid Precautions Committee heard. If not done they could be criticised for allowing a public building without adequate protection and could not ask other stores or factories to comply with such regulations. But it would need to have 25 feet of concrete, with earth on top, to make it bomb-proof. It was absolutely and entirely impossible. 38 06 24a & b

1938 07 07

In Germany practically every civilian had been trained so that in the event of an air raid they knew what to do. Cambridge would be divided into 10 minor centres which would act as headquarters for the mobile first-aid parties and there would be five main first-aid posts. At least 1,000 volunteers were needed but at present only 200 had come forward, mainly women. They could not be expected to carry stretchers and do heavy lifting work. Cherry Hinton needed 30 air raid wardens, each looking after 120 houses. 38 07 07

1938 07 18

The Spanish people were fighting our battle & the British Government should take strong measures, a Conference on Spain in the Cambridge Masonic Hall was told. If Franco were to win as the pawn of Mussolini and Hitler another European war would be much closer. Meanwhile a service of prayer on behalf of religious persecution in Germany was held at the Synagogue in Thompson's Lane.

Cambridge Refugee Committee exists to help all German and Austrian refugees and would be pleased to receive gifts of money 38 07 18 & a. Cambridge lorry for Spain – 38 07 16c

1938 07 19

Each village should have a utility squad of men or women with knowledge of first aid, buildings and fire-fighting who could help in an emergency. Parish councils should establish a first-aid point with hot water where a casualty could wash. There might be five distribution stores for about 80,000 respirators that would be assembled and sent out in cartons to air raid wardens for personal distribution, the Home Office suggests 38 07 19a & b

1938 07 23

The Air Raid Precautions Committee has constructed several types of household trenches at Ditton Lane for demonstration purposes. Two are about six feet below ground level and are roofed in, whilst the third is merely an open trench with an embankment around it. Shelters of this type can be constructed of any suitable material in the average garden and are strongly recommended as give the best practical protection to a man and his family. The duties of Air Raid Wardens were outlined: they should be sensible and able to keep their wits in times of stress. 38 07 23 c-e

1938 08 05

Some 900 aircraft are taking part in an exercise testing the air defence of Great Britain. The attacking force will have 36 bomber squadrons (some from Bassingbourn and Wyton) while the defenders will consist of 23 fighter stations and 14 bomber squadrons, including planes from Duxford, Debden, Feltwell, Mildenhall and Stradishall. Anti-aircraft and searchlight batteries will be spread across the Eastern Counties. Bombers will fly without navigation lights unless other aircraft approach and fighters are forbidden from attacking below 1,000 ft 38 08 05a plane crashes at Melbourn – 38 08 08. Mayor made tour of town, all in darkness apart from one or two lighted windows – 38 08 08b

1938 08 06

People in an area from Yorkshire to Buckingham, including Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, should extinguish out-door lights on their premises, draw blinds and curtains and take all other measures to prevent illumination from being visible during the air defence exercises. Those compelled to travel by road during the period must bear in mind that streetlights will be extinguished. If weather conditions are such that large numbers of bombers can operate without due risk, intensive raids may be anticipated. Fighter patrols will probably be kept away 38 08 06

1938 09

St Luke's school closed Sept so teachers assemble & distribute gas masks [446.12.2]

1938 09 14

The Cambridge Scientists' Anti-War Group, whose book 'The Protection of the Public from Aerial Attack' was criticised in the House of Commons, has been championed by Prof J.B.S. Haldane. He says they should carry out experiments into the effect of gas with the assistance of the Chemical Defence Research Department. They have also worked out a scheme for evacuating many of the population of Cambridge into surrounding villages 38 09 14a

1938 09 17

It has been a momentous week. Those of us involved with the daily production of a newspaper have spent a harassing time. Some say that today we know too much of the happenings in the world and know it much too quickly. The tension became painfully apparent at the weekend when the world waited for Hitler's pronouncement. Was it to be war...? But then a bolt from the blue. 'The Premier is

to fly to see Hitler tomorrow to endeavour to find a peaceful solution to the crisis'. Our fervent hope is that international chaos has been averted 38 09 17a

1938 09 21

In the event of air attack schools would be closed for a month as men would not be able to prevent their wives from going out to fetch their children. Many homes had no room in which to build shelters so two types had been constructed in Ditton Lane; one was open and about six-feet deep but there was nothing to prevent a corrugated iron roofing to be placed over the top. The other was covered and had seating. They afforded a greater degree of protection than cellars where there was a great danger of being buried by masonry, a meeting was told 38 09 21c.

1938 09 26

Mayor's air raid shelter – pic – 38 09 26

1938 09 27

The Mayor, E. Saville Peck, writes: "I realise that at this time we are all anxious about the present international crisis. I wish to assure the public that so far as practicable the necessary steps in regard to A.R.P. are being taken to provide protection against both gas and high explosive. Sufficient gas respirators are already in Cambridge and instructions will be issued as to where they can be obtained. First aid posts are being organised and equipped. Householders should consider making small trenches in their gardens for protection of their families in the case of emergency". 38 09 26a

1938 09 27

Sketch for a garden ARP trench – 38 09 27

1938 09 28

Ladies lead the war – women with respirators picture – 38 09 28

1938 09 28

Leys school dig ARP trenches – 38 09 28a

1938 09 29

Cambridge colleges have sent out notices to undergraduates ordering them not to come into residence until further instruction. However examinations will take place as usual and candidates will be allowed to come up for them. Meanwhile preparations continue for the reception of 10-11,000 London children it is planned to evacuate. Church halls and schools will be suitable for temporary accommodation. Women helpers, blankets and rugs are still needed 38 09 29a

1938 09 29

Calmly and without fuss, Cambridge people have started to collect their gas masks in readiness for 'come what may'. A steady stream of callers arrived at all distribution centres. Schoolmistress and volunteers showed each caller the simple method of fitting the masks on. Tragic was the contrast at Milton Road School where during playtime small children shouted 'We want peace' while adults waited outside to be fitted with their masks. It drove home Mr Chamberlain's words "How horrible that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing" 38 09 29aa

1938 09 29

Air-raid trench in garden, Coleridge Road – 38 09 29aaa

1938 10 01

The Mayor said he'd received a telegram that plans to evacuate London children had been cancelled. Later he got another saying they were on their way. They arrived in three motor coaches, the children's ages ranging from six weeks to four years. Accommodation was found at Homerton and

Newnham College. Their mothers left the children, aged from six weeks to four years, to the tender mercies of students and returned to London. Today the babies have rejoined their mothers, which is a very happy solution. 38 10 01

1938 10 07

William Coad of Cavendish Avenue has come up with an answer to the need for underground A.R.P. shelters. His scheme is to construct a sub-way car park underneath Cambridge Market Square with inlet and outlet ramps, which, in the event of an emergency, could be converted into an effective shelter accommodating several thousand people. A nominal car-parking fee would eventually pay for the initial outlay and alleviate the need for suitable garaging for business men coming into the town. 38 10 07

1938 10 08

What to do with gas mask now crisis over – Ronald Searle cartoon - 38 10 08a

1938 10 11

Anti-aircraft battalion placed searchlights around Cambridge – thanks – 38 10 11a

1938 10 17

Cambridgeshire Regiment to be raised to war establishment but First Eastern General Hospital will not remain and recruiting will cease – 38 10 17 & a

1938 10 29

Fireworks, jeers, cheers and shouts punctuated a meeting organised by the University Socialist Club addressed by Major Atlee, the Leader of the Opposition, in the Corn Exchange. The noise died down when he began to speak but there were frequent interruptions caused by exploding fireworks. All police leave was cancelled because of the meeting and a visit by Sir Oswald Mosley to the C.U. Fascist Association dinner in the Dorothy Café. But rowdiness was principally of the vocal kind. 38 10 29a

1938 10 31

Detailed statement of County Air Raid Precautions shows 30 tons of gas masks had been transported to Shire Hall where they were assembled by clerical staff and outside helpers. But they were still over 5,000 respirators short and telegrams had been sent to the Home Office. Parish Councils will establish a first-aid point in each centre of population but there will be no public shelters as it was safer for people to disperse rather than congregate. They would provide services to meet needs of casualties caused by the chance dropping of bombs 38 10 31a

1938 11 17

The President of the Cambridge Union Society is amongst signatories of a letter to the German Ambassador in London protesting strongly against the barbarous violence and cruel legislation inflicted without mercy or justification on the Jews of Germany. "We record our horror and revulsion at these acts of collective punishment, deprivation and arbitrary arrest and are appalled at the terrible suffering imposed on thousands of men, women and children for no other reason than their race", it reads. The University branch of the League of Nations also passed a resolution in protest 38 11 17

1938 11 28

A pacifist convention held in Labour Hall, Norfolk Street under the chairmanship of Dr Alex Wood called for every citizen to renounce all participation in and preparation for war. It was a crime against humanity and a sin against God. You cannot destroy German militarism through killing German soldiers. The colossal expenditure on death should be stopped and our country should take the lead by disarming 38 11 28 & a



1938 12 19

Cambridgeshire Regiment dinner addressed by Commanding Officer, R.N. Drake Digby. The responsibilities resting on the Territorial Army were tremendous. They had got their new Bren guns and anti-tank rifles and every man had to learn to use them to be ready to defend Newmarket 38 12 19 & a

1939

Air Training Corps formed [Misc.4.2]

1939 01 11

Ely RCD discussed the Government's scheme for the evacuation of civil population. Children would have priority; the acceptance of children will be voluntary but those who refuse must accommodate other persons. Schools will be required for the education of the children transferred; there would be one teacher or helper for ten children. There will be payment of 10s 6d per week where one child is taken, and eight and six each for more. Those under school age will be accompanied by their mothers or some other person and in these cases householders will only provide lodgings, not board., at the rate of five shillings a week for each adult and three shillings for a child. 39 01 11

1939 01 21

Evacuation scheme - Mayor sends letter to each home [1.15]

1939 01 28

ARP on agenda [1.16]

1939 02 04

Spanish Relief Committee meeting attended by members of International Brigade [1.16]

1939 02 07

Men and women members of the International Brigade, who have seen service in Spain fighting for the Government, spoke at the Guildhall which was almost filled to capacity. The meeting was called by the Cambridge Co-ordinating Committee for Spanish Relief. In Spain rickets was becoming rife, hunger dropsy was beginning to appear and anaemia was present. Between 300 and 400 people were dying from actual starvation in Madrid every day. For the first time in history in America surplus food was not being destroyed but was being sent to Spain. 39 02 07

1939 02 07

The Auxiliary Fire Service wound up their training at Cherry Hinton Hall with a demonstration using specially made incendiary bombs. Two were used to set fire to a house of boxes kindly donated by local tradesmen which was tackled using an ordinary hand-pump with a spray jet. Many important lessons were learned. The bombs give off intense heat and coloured glasses must be worn by the fireman to protect his eyes. The application of water increases the ferocity of the flames. 39 02 07a

1939 03 03

Trenches dug Midsummer Common [7.6]

1939 03 03

Cambridge is to raise a 600 bed Military Hospital (Territorial) with an establishment of 23 officers, 50 nursing sisters and 145 other ranks. Steps are being taken to provide temporary accommodation for officers and social purposes pending the erection of permanent buildings. This new unit replaces the original 1st Eastern General raised in Cambridge and the Isle of Ely in 1908. After the war, the hospital was disbanded, but in 1938 it was reconstituted under the command of Lt.-Col. C. H. Budd. M.C. T.D. 39 03 03 CIPof

1939 03 22

The Basque Children's Hostel is still in need of support. The children came over in 1937 and moved to the present hostel in 1938. The conquest of the greater part of Spain by Franco and his Fascist friends meant their parents were scattered and it was dangerous for them to return. Several businesses had given valuable support including Chivers and Pordage. It was a very happy home. There had been no bullying or dishonesty. Three of the boys were at garages being trained as motor mechanics, one girl was a dressmaker, another a laboratory assistant 39 03 22a

1939 03 28

Cambridge members of the Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defence are being trained as ambulance and car drivers. A feature of the classes is tuition in driving in the dark in gas masks and without lights and in changing wheels, fuses etc under the same conditions. This instruction is being given by Mr North of Messrs Marshall's, Jesus Lane. Women wishing to enrol for this important National Service should apply to the W.V.S., Old Post Office, St Andrew's Street - 39 03 28

1939 03 29

Defence Cadet Corps Squadron formed – 39 03 29 & a

1939 03 30

The A.R.P. First Aid post at Auckland Road will be staffed by a doctor and trained nurse and give more extensive first-aid. Two practices have already taken place. A sham air raid was enacted last night with casualties brought in by ambulance and unloaded by stretcher bearers. Nurses and orderlies under the direction of Dr Walker, dealt with them. Realism was added by squibs which were let off and red paint was used to give the impression of real wounds. 39 03 30 & a

1939 04 06

St Regis luxury flats, Chesterton Road. A unique feature is the provision of a large air raid shelter built under the garages. It has a concrete roof and will be perfectly safe against all but a direct hit by a heavy bomb. Provision has been made for gas-proofing it in case of emergency. 39 04 06a

1939 04 17

The old First Eastern General Hospital had been born again last year, but it had a short life and died in the September crisis. Then the Cabinet decided to form eight Territorial General Hospitals and it was revived as the "2nd (1st Eastern) General Hospital". There are 23 officers and 145 other ranks, a matron and nurses and it will have the same number of beds, about 600. Old Comrades can assist training recruits in the initial stages, they were told at their annual dinner 39 04 17

1939 04 19

Sir Will Spens, Master of Corpus Christi College, has been appointed Commissioner for the Eastern Region under the Civil Defence Scheme, with Lord Eltisley as his deputy to direct Civil Defence on behalf of the Government in war-time from 12 cities and towns throughout Great Britain for three years as from April 1. 39 04 21 CIPof 39 04 19

1939 04 19

British Portland Cement has constructed an emergency headquarters at the disused Saxon Cement Works in Coldham's Lane. Built by William Sindall it includes a complete set of offices with bombproof shelters and all A.R.P. necessities. There are two decontamination rooms with gas proof windows and splinter-proof steel shutters. Seven bomb-proof dugouts covered with eight inches of reinforced ferro-concrete and two feet of earth can each accommodate 30 people. It has an air-filtration plant, central heating and electricity supplied from an accumulator driven by a crude oil engine 39 04 19b & c

1939 04 19

National service and ARP: the young man's job: prepare today. How you can help yourself – articles explaining situation – 39 04 19d & f

1939 04 19

Lavender & Bateman for air raid shelters of all kinds – advertisement – 39 04 19e

1939 04 19

Air raid precautions. Every house should have a refuge room. A cellar or basement is the best. The stronger the walls, floor or ceiling the better. If possible the room should be without windows. If this is impossible steps can be taken to lessen the danger of the windows being blown in by blast and so perhaps allow the entry of gas-laden air. Sandbags or boxes filled with earth should be placed outside them. Otherwise trenches can be dug seven foot deep with at least two entrances and covered with corrugated iron topped with two feet of earth. Keep these pages for future reference – 39 04 19 e,f, g, h

1939 04 22

An appeal was made for townspeople to join the army of National Service. Cambridge requires 540 air wardens, 189 special constables and 90 men for the auxiliary fire service. Women could join the Land Army, nursing or first-aid services or help with the evacuation of children. The world is in the hands of certain irresponsible and uncontrolled men. Vast multitudes had lined the streets of Berlin to cheer their leader, the man who had massacred the liberties of two neighbouring people. We need to be ready 39 04 22

1939 04 29

In the event of war there would be several hundred thousand casualties in the first few weeks. Cambridge was tolerably safe from air raids but patients would be transferred to Addenbrooke's Hospital from other areas. But there was a shortage of nurses. A nurse could do a great deal for a casualty with no hospital, but a hospital could do nothing for a casualty without a doctor and a nurse – 39 04 29 & a

1939 05 01

It is unlikely that the Water Company's source of supply, the Fleam Dyke pumping station, would be chosen as a target by enemy bombers or that a direct could put both duplicate sets of machinery out of action. However the disused Fulbourn pumping station has been completely reconditioned as a precaution. But if Cambridge was raided it is almost inevitable that water mains would sustain considerable damage the Manager said. The Company supplied water to 81,000 people but this may well be increased to over 110,000 by evacuations from London, 39 05 01 & a

1939 05 03

If war came some kind of press censorship would be inevitable, the Home Secretary told the Newspaper Society dinner. Retiring President, Captain A.C. Taylor, Managing Director of the CDN, said the provincial newspaper editor was very discrete and trustworthy but must make a true and faithful record of events as they take place. Only a free Press, unfettered by Government interference, can be looked upon as a true Press, and a faithful record of everyday affairs 39 05 03b

1939 05 05

Air raid trenches would not protect people in event of air raid. Seven minutes would elapse after the warning before the planes were here. During that time head wardens had to get their wardens out of bed and they, in turn, had to get people out of their beds into the trenches. Under this scheme 30,000 people would be turned out into the darkened streets where there might be a lot of transport. Instead steel shelters should be provided, councillors were told. Cambridge was a safe place and trenches were practically no defence against aerial bombing. And they were narrow: young men will be touching knees with girls (Laughter) 39 05 05 & a ,39 05 11 & a

1939 05 08

The Ely and Chatteris area would receive about 9,000 evacuees in three days, the W.V.S. was told. Accommodation offered for the children far exceeded the number that would be billeted, but there

was not sufficient accommodation for adults. The first batch of evacuees would arrive at Ely at 1.05pm, bringing 1,000 and the second train at 5.35. The receiving stations in Ely would be Silver Street and Broad Street schools and the W.V.S. could escort them to their billets. Food would be provided but the authorities did not have the means to prepare or serve it 39 05 08 & a,

1939 05 13

Ronald Searle cartoon having joined Royal Engineers – 39 05 13a

1939 05 15

Committee discuss ARP trenches - “might waste -£50,000 [1.18]

1939 05 20

2,500 Undergraduates packed Churchill Meeting in Corn Exchange, voted to gladly accept the measure of conscription involved in the Military Training Bill. Churchill was occasionally interrupted by cheers, ironic laughter, and cries but generally speaking, the meeting passed off quietly. What violence there was occurred outside. Long before the meeting was due to start a queue formed up outside, and some of those unable to get in attempted to force an entrance. A rush was made on the west door and in the course of the melee, a policeman lost his helmet. Other officers repelled attempts to enter by the main door. A crowd of undergraduates several hundred strong remained in Corn Exchange Street until a proctor ordered them to disperse. 39 05 26 CIPof [7.7] 39 05 24a

1939 05 26

Cambridgeshire Regiment raised a second battalion. From now onwards, those applying will be placed on a waiting list. 39 05 26 CIPof

1939 06 03

Under the Military Training Act, 1939, the names of some 1,200 undergraduates and 800 other men aged 21 are being registered at the Senate House and the Central School. Medical examinations will begin next week and men allocated into four grades, one being unfit for any degree of service. The others will then be interviewed by the War Office to determine their most appropriate allocation 39 06 03

1939 06 29

Emergency plans envisage that as London will probably be attacked before Cambridge the County Infirmary should provide for 250 casualties from Central London. The Ministry would provide bedding and equipment but mattresses and pillows would be supplied as cases only, to be filled as required. It would be up-graded with an operating theatre and X-ray rooms, emergency lighting and better sanitary conveniences. But in the event of local casualties the London cases would be transferred to other hospitals 39 06 29

1939 07 08

During the forthcoming ‘Black Out’ test there will be something like a thousand people taking part. There will be no general alarm but air raid signals will be transmitted by telephone to the various centres. You will be relieved to know that no houses are to be set on fire (!) but a red lamp and smoking candle will indicate that an outbreak of fire has occurred and wardens finding them will call the brigade. There will also be casualties of various kinds in the streets with labels on them to signify they are ‘injured’. Streets lights will be extinguished and motorists asked to drive with sidelights. 39 07 08

1939 07 10

Perse School Scout Troop demonstrated the way they can assist in an emergency. Into the arena strolled a group of passers-by, then came the wail of a siren leading to a mad rush for an ARP shelter. Exploding rockets gave a hint of realism to the scene. Scouts ran to various ‘casualties’ and treated their ‘wounds’. Afterwards the wounded were carried on emergency stretchers made of Scouts’ staves

placed through the arms of overcoats and mackintoshes. The wounded took great care to make themselves comfortable on this rather uncomfortable mode of transport. 39 07 10

1939 07 14

An exercise demonstrated war-time black-out conditions in Cambridge. Streets lamps were turned out, speed limit signs extinguished and red hurricane lamps were placed on traffic islands. The external lights on police boxes were also put out and the bulbs removed as an additional precaution. Most vehicles drove slowly with only side and rear lights and cars using head-lights were stopped. Lights at the railway station were left on but carriage blinds on the 11.55 from London were drawn at Bishop's Stortford 39 07 14

1939 07 14

The A.R.P. exercise envisaged that an incendiary bomb had fallen on the Tivoli Cinema and no water was available from the hydrant. Within a few minutes a van-drawn Scammel pump pulled up outside. Firemen transported the pump to the riverside from which a hose was laid to a portable canvas dam near the burning building. There were four casualties – presumably usherettes, two suffering serious burns. Eighteen lorries were used as ambulances with an illuminated red cross on the front. 37 07 14a

1939 07 15

Although a considerable number of Militiamen from Cambridge travelled to their depots the scene at Cambridge railway station was little different from a normal Saturday. I expected to see goodbye and good luck messages being given to the first of the young men who are to give the next six months to the service of their country. But there were no martial strains to cheer them on their way. The explanation is that the men were free to travel as they wished and by travelling in small parties they avoided any publicity – and any reporters 39 07 15a

1939 07 21

British Legion veterans & Territorials took part in the huge rally on Jesus Green. Line upon line they stood in front of the platform from which the service, which formed part of the rally, was conducted, medals gleaming on every breast. To one side of the serried ranks was a space reserved for the standards. Twenty thousand spectators were in attendance. A far wider audience heard the service, for it was broadcast. A ceremonial march that preceded the service provided an impressive spectacle. An address was given by Admiral of the Fleet the Rt Hon. Lord Chatfield, Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence. 39 07 21 CIPof

1939 07 28

Waterbeach Aerodrome - proposed acquiring by the Air Ministry of County Council land at Winfield Farm, Waterbeach, as an aerodrome. The Council had 20 tenants there. Two of them won cups for the best smallholdings this year; both lost legs in the war. The Committee wrote to MP and made a strong protest to the Air Ministry. They said there was nowhere else they could possibly go. 39 07 28 CIPof

1939 08 04

Big Black-Out Test.—Cambridgeshire part of a gigantic black-out test. Twenty-five counties, in which the County and City of London will be included, will be in complete darkness—or as near to it as possible—on the night of August 9-10. More than half of England (from the Isle of Wight up to Lincolnshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire) will be included in the biggest black-out test ever attempted. In all places, except the London region, the test will start at midnight. Request that there shall not be any light to interfere what is aimed at a 100 per cent, black-out. R.A.F. observers will be flying to report on the results of the great darkness, which is to approach as near to war conditions as possible. 39 08 04 CIPof

1939 08 19

Tribunal consider conscientious objectors [1.20]

1939 08 24

Should lighting regulations be brought into force motor car side and rear lamps must have electric light bulbs not exceeding seven watts, acetylene lamp burners must not consume more than 14 litres per hour and in oil lamps only one burner must be used. Light may be emitted only through a single aperture facing to the front or rear of the car of not more than two inch diameter. Front glasses must be obscured with white tissue paper or paint. Head lamps may be used provided the whole of the reflector is blackened. 39 08 24, a

1939 08 24

Shoppers at Cambridge's Woolworth stores were suddenly shepherded outside as part of an A.R.P. test. The staff had been warned but customers were quite in the dark when whistles blew just before the usual Thursday closing time. Four of the girls behind the counters approached the 250 customers on both floors and asked them to leave as a test was in progress. Others opened all the tills and put the money into bags, then made for the 'safety room' at the back of the store. Within two minutes fifteen seconds all money was placed in a fire-proof safe, the lights were out, the doors locked and the store's fire-fighting squad had their equipment ready for action. 39 08 24b

1939 08 25

Complete confidence in Cambridge preparations against air attack was experienced by Aid. W. L. Briggs (Chairman of the Cambridge A.R.P. Committee): "I feel that we shall be able, in case of emergency, to put up a thorough working skeleton organisation which we shall make every endeavour to enlarge as the necessity arises. With the volunteers that we have got we have worked persistently to put into operation all the necessary measures. But it must be realised that from the first we have been, from the Government point of view, a non-vulnerable area, and this has restricted us very much in making the preparations which we think are necessary, but every section has persistently and thoroughly worked out the details of their duties. First aid is trained and equipped as far as possible." With regard to the evacuation scheme", Aid. Briggs added: "Everything has been worked out to the fullest detail, both with regard to reception, billeting, feeding and medical attention" 39 08 25 CIPof

1939 08 25

In view of the crisis all police leave has been cancelled and special constables have been called up. The Fitzwilliam Museum is packing valuable items so they can be removed should the situation worsen and cinemas warned they will be closed in the event of war. Kerbs at street corners have been painted white in readiness for any black-out. There was a constant stream of people collecting gas-masks and a steady demand for black paper and curtains. Prayers for peace will be said at churches and it is hoped that Hitler will see it is suicidal to attempt to make war 39 08 25a

1939 08 28

There are to be two anti-aircraft batteries and one anti-aircraft signalling unit based in Cambridge. Recruiting for the batteries opens at 45 Parkside and Salisbury Villas for the signalling unit. Cambridge has already responded to the call for National Service. The Cambridgeshire Regiment is over establishment, the Royal Engineers unit, 2nd General Hospital and the Cambridge National Defence Company are complete. A second Auxiliary Territorial 1939 Service (clerical) company for women will also be raised. 39 08 28

1939 08 29

First ARP shelter at junction Cherry Hinton Road & Perne road – 39 08 29

1939 08 29

Air-raid siren set off accidentally at Waterworks in Rustat Road – 39 08 29a

1939 08 30

Addenbrooke's Hospital & Police station guarded by sandbags – 38 08 30a & b



1939 08 31

Police station sandbags photo – 39 08 31a

1939 08 31

Evacuation from London begins – 39 08 31

1939 08 31

Lloyd's Bank practiced evacuating their staff to air raid shelters in the two strong rooms adjoining the main hall of the bank. Those in Lloyds Bank Chambers used a specially constructed cat-walk over the roof to the fire escape window. The two strong rooms are situated one below the other and a trapdoor will supply a means of escape should one of the entrances become blocked. In the event of a raid customers can accompany the staff or seek the nearest public shelter in wine vaults under Peas Hill  
39 08 31

1939 09 01

Poland invokes treaty with Britain, Full scale attack by Polish troops, gas masks, evacuees – front page stories 38 09 01

1939 09 01

An experimental gas mask drill was held for Ramsden Square children. Over 100 assembled and were instructed in the proper use of the gas masks by the senior warden, Mr E. Winkworth. They were told a whistle would sound in the event of an air raid, that the sound of a rattle would indicate a gas attack and a bell would sound when it was safe for them to come from their shelters. Aeroplanes roared overhead as the children were instructed 39 09 01b

1939 09 01

Compulsory powers of billeting are now in force in Cambridge. Enough voluntary offers have been received to take in all the children who are coming in school parties. But expectant mothers and those with young children are also expected and householders will be required to house them. The payment is five shillings a week for each adult and three shilling for each child for lodging only. The adults will be responsible for their food. The third class comprise voluntary helpers from the evacuated areas working full time in Cambridge. The payment for them will be twenty-one shillings for board and lodging which will be paid by the Government. 39 09 01c

1939 09 01

First Air Raid shelter erected, for wardens [7.10]

1939 09 01

The first children who have been separated from their London families by the dark threat of war arrived at Cambridge station. The train contained 800 boys and girls, all had a label bearing their name and address, a few carried a football, several had oranges. They were handed bags containing their rations and helped on to the waiting buses 39 09 01a 39 04 04b

1939 09 04

CDN reduced to four pages due war conditions – 39 09 04a. Censorship started : based on idea that contents of every journal would be known in Germany in 24 hours; banned references to Royal Family, bombing - may not mention places, no report of air crashes unless civilian property or people involved & no mention of weather - could not mention wet roads or fog which may have led to crashes [9.1]

1939 09 04

Cambridge had its first air raid warning in the early hours of the morning and hundreds of householders left their beds and adjourned to lower rooms. Others, however, slept through the noise of the sirens. One householder, doubtful about the efficiency of their black-out wrapped a woollen scarf round the electric light. Shortly afterwards they donned their gas masks after noticing a very

pungent smell. Later they noticed it came from the scarf which had been charred through. The alarm was caused by the passing of unidentified aircraft over the Eastern Counties. Fighter aircraft went up to investigate 39 09 04

1939 09 08

Blow Falls. Well, (writes Watchman), the blow has fallen at last. When I wrote this feature last week, there was still hope that hostilities would not break out, but Hitler has decided otherwise, and now the whole country and Empire is rallying with France to fight for a great principle . . . We enter the conflict regretfully, but resolutely, and fully confident that we shall win through . . . The new lighting restrictions have made progress difficult and strange during the last few days, but we are gradually becoming used to the new conditions . . . One day this week the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries broadcast an important message to farmers and the rural community generally. He said that the farmer's main job is to increase, in an orderly fashion, our home production of essential foodstuffs—a task just as vital to the nation as that which has to be carried out by our armed forces. As far as the immediate after-harvest plans are concerned, the majority of farmers must think in terms of ploughing up more land, both for supply of human food and animal feeding stuffs. The immediate task is to plough up as much land as possible for next year's harvest. 39 09 08 CIPof

1939 09 08

War Measures at Cambridge. Banks, buses and libraries are among the services affected by the situation. Mr. A. Cousin, the Eastern Counties Company District Traffic Supt., said that after-dark bus services had had to be curtailed, owing to lighting restrictions "and of course, the cinema buses are not running at the moment, as there are no cinemas open." Both lending departments and reading rooms of the public libraries in the borough are closing by sunset, in view of the lighting regulations. Banking hours have also been altered. They are now from 1.0 to 2 from Monday to Friday and 10 to 1 on Saturdays. This week the stained glass in the east window of King's College Chapel was removed. It was being packed and taken to a place of safety. 39 09 08 CIPof

1939 09 08

Evacuees at Cambridge. - first of the children arrived at Cambridge from London on Friday. During the weekend many others arrived and were dealt with. On Friday, numerous helpers gathered at the station. Among them were a number of Rangers who came on duty at six o'clock in the morning to fill the "ration bags" ready for distribution among the evacuees destined for the county on their arrival. 39 09 08 CIPof [1.11, 7.9]

1939 09 09

"Cambridge transformed - townsmen gone, evacuees here, strangers working away from London, unfamiliar garb, sandbag walls rising, darkened streets ..." [1.21]

1939 09 09

Kings college chapel glass removed from East window, eventually only 4 of 26 windows left, rest [largely glass but mostly boarding; some ask 'what use windows if building destroyed?' Ordinary houses protect windows with sandbags etc [1.21,3.13,7.2]

1939 09 15

Trenches constructed Milton Road school, followed by County High School [7.11,7.12]

1939 09 15

War-time Farming Push.—The war has come at a time of the year that gives farming the best possible opportunity to prepare for the great effort it must now make in the defence of our country (writes Watchman). Harvest is nearly finished, and has turned out better than at one time seemed possible. Given reasonable weather, farmers will be able to push on with their normal early cultivations and supplement them with ploughing up even more land, for another 1½ million acres of land must be brought under the plough this coming year. It is an ambitious programme, for we are attempting in one, year what we only achieved in four years in the last war .... Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire

are expected to have little difficulty in supplying and probably exceeding, their allotted contributions towards the 1,500,000 acres of land which the Minister of Agriculture proposes to bring under the plough this autumn. 39 09 15 CIPof

1939 09 16

Public ARP shelters open Peas Hill, problems when locked, 40 08 20 [1.23, 1.24,7.]

1939 09 18

The University Arms pleaded guilty to failing to obscure lights in the hotel and preventing them being visible outside the building. Mr Bradford, the manager, said he had 400 windows and 40 skylights. It had been impossible to screen all these within 36 hours of war being declared. The skylight in the kitchen took four men three days to screen properly. Four of the six hotel porters who would have done the work had been called up and although they'd bought dark blinds some light shone through little cracks. They'd also put notices in each room asking visitors not to open the windows until they had put the lights out. 39 09 18 & a Geldhart public house, Sleaford Street also accused

1939 09 23

County council employees called up to fight will have their army wages made up to what they would have received. But what other employer would think off making up salaries in this way? They were already more fortunate than others because their jobs would be kept open for them. But they would have to be replaced meaning wages and salaries would be re-duplicated. Many people in business would have to close, others were working for nothing. Properties would fall into the hands of the receivers and rateable values go down, councillors heard 39 09 23 Cambridge does same – 39 09 25

1939 10 03

Many University staff have already left Cambridge since the start of the war and students from London and St Bartholomew's Hospital have joined students at the Medical School. Undergraduates will continue their studies 39 10 03 & a

1939 10 05

Dressmaker, hairdresser, dancing expert, officer clerk, shop assistant and television worker. All these are working side by side potato picking, milking cows, muck spreading and clearing out pigsties at the Cambridge University Farm on Huntingdon Road. The girls are members of the Women's Land Army undergoing a month's training before being sent to work for farmers. The majority are in their late teens and early twenties but some are older. One has her two grown-up daughters with her; her son and his brother are doing their bit in the Tank Corps in France. 39 10 05

1939 10 09

The majority of basements in Cambridge are useless as public air raid shelters since they need to be capable of holding between 50 and 100 people. But those at Herbert Robinson's Garage in Regent Street, Zion Baptist Church, Mr Wheatley's in Sturton Street and Potts' Mineral Water Works in Castle Street are suitable. However these are not enough and shelters should be constructed in various areas. They will be of brick and concrete and accommodate 50 people. Shelters in schools should be available for the public during the night and at week-ends. 39 10 09a

1939 10 11

Air Raid precautions committee have ensured that petrol supplies will be available for special services and several garages have reserved tanks and pumps for them. There are decontaminating centres at Mill Road store yard, Cherry Hinton Hall and Victoria Road. First aid depots have been set up at Shirley and other Schools with first aid parties and two ambulances. Electrically controlled sirens have been installed which together with the steam sirens should be adequate to give necessary warnings 39 10 11

1939 10 12

ARP shelter under construction at Christ's Pieces – photo – 39 10 12

1939 10 13

Happy Evacuees. A suggestion that there should be a re-shuffling of evacuees around Cambs. villages, drew a spirited protest from Cambs. Education Committee. The number of evacuated children of school age attending public elementary schools was 4,289, made up of 2,713 in school parties and 1,679 others. Three hundred and sixty-six secondary school children had been evacuated. Extraordinary good feeling between evacuated teachers and our own teachers. 39 10 13 CIPof

1939 10 13

Happy evacuees from the poorer parts of London enjoyed a birthday party for 'Little Joan'. She had told her new 'mummy' that she had never had a birthday party before and it added to her happiness to share it with chums from Fulham. Joan enjoys her 'holiday' home and only wants to go back 'now and again'. She would like her mother to come and see her in Cambridge. But mum cannot afford the trip. Other children are saving their money to pay their own mummy's fare. 39 10 13a

1939 10 20

Call-up - between 600 and 800 students and townsmen will be affected by the first proclamation under the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939. The smallness of the number is accounted for by the fact that many men in this age group have already joined the Forces. On Saturday, October 21, - the anniversary of Trafalgar - all men who on October 21 were between the age of 20 years and 22 years, are required to register at the Senate House, King's Parade 39 10 20 CIPof

1939 10 27

Undergraduates help building sandbag walls etc [7.13]

1939 10 27

Hitler's bombs will have no effect on the air raid shelter in the basement of Herbert Robinson's garage in Regent Street which is not only the largest in Cambridge but impregnable even from a direct hit. It has three steel reinforced floors above the actual basement which comprise the shelter. Experts say that even if the first or second floors were damaged by a direct hit from a bomb, people sheltered would still be immune. It comprises 6,000 square feet and has accommodation for over 700 people 39 10 27a

1939 10 28

The Food Officer in Cambridge (Mr C.H. Kemp) and his stall of about 100 have been busy preparing ration books for the time when the Government brings the scheme into operation within the next three weeks. Workers, some volunteers, others recruited from the Ministry of Labour, have prepared 500 cards a day. Now all is ready. Rationed foods will be meat, bacon, ham, butter, margarine, cooking fats (including lard and dripping) and sugar. There will be an ordinary ration book, another for children under six, one for travellers and a supplemental book for boys aged 13-18 who are considered to need more meat than the average adult. 39 10 28

1939 11 01

A.F.S. station – men waiting call to action, photo – 39 11 01a

1939 11 02

ARP trenches, Brunswick school – photo – 39 11 02

1939 11 04

Cambridge is a much more cheerful place in the black-out today than it was when the war started. Then cyclists and pedestrians were few and it felt like a dead city. Now with theatres and cinemas

going strong there is plenty of life and the whole atmosphere has changed. But with more traffic comes more danger. Some motorists and cyclists go too fast in the darkened streets. But the worst offenders are pedestrians dawdling in the roadway without any thought for the poor people awheel who with dim lights have to thread their way through the streets. 39 11 04

1939 11 08

Cambridge Fire Boat trial – photo – 39 11 08

1939 11 13

The Conscientious Objectors Tribunal under Judge W. Lawson Campbell heard its first cases. A teacher from St Faith's School thought war was incompatible with the teaching of Jesus Christ, a clerk at the Cambridge Electrical Supply Company was a member of the Peace Pledge Union & believed military training led to the decadence of the human race while an undergraduate said he felt war degraded humanity but would do medical work. 38 11 13 & a; also 39 11 14, 39 11 15, 39 11 16a & b

1939 11 16

A letter from the Rev 'Tubby' Clayton was read when Cambridge Toc H Club opened above no.13 Corn Exchange Street, a place which three weeks ago was a home for pigeons. With the town labouring under the restrictions of black-out it was in need of a place where Service men can read, write and play games. On Sundays they can bring their lady friends. Above the entrance are these words: "All rank abandon ye who enter here". 39 11 16c

1939 11 28

Air Raid Precautions. Testing of air raid warning sirens. In accordance with instructions from the Ministry of Home Security, all air raid warning sirens in Cambridge will be tested at 1pm on the first day of each month. If an air raid warning is received on a day when tests are to be held the signal will be reinforced by a free use of whistles by wardens and police. Any siren which has been sounded for real during an alert will not be tested the following month – C.H. Kemp. Town Clerk 39 11 28

1939 11 29

Some classrooms in Trumpington and St Paul's schools were 'dark pits' because of first-aid depots being placed in schools. There was a great danger of sandbags making the rooms damp and as classrooms were being used for people to sleep in all night it was difficult to get them aired, councillors were told. It was also alarming to see enormous laundry vans standing in narrow playgrounds which have to be manoeuvred when the children were about. But at Cherry Hinton there was nowhere else they could go. However three halls there were being used by children now. If they were not fit for first-aid posts, they were not fit to teach children in, Mrs Rackham said. 39 11 29c

1939 12 01

A Clare College undergraduate told the Conscientious Objectors' Tribunal that he hoped to do psychological work. The idea had come into his head while working in a Basque children's camp when he noticed that many of them had a kind of fit at the sound of an aeroplane. He was registered on condition he continued his studies. A shop assistant from Hinton Avenue, who was a lay reader in the Methodist Church, was registered on condition he undertook agricultural work. A man from Fulbrooke Road objected on religious grounds; he was a research physicist at the Cavendish Laboratory while a King's College graduate appealed on moral grounds. He was prepared and anxious to perform non-combatant service. 39 12 01d & e

1939 12 08

A News reporter inspected all types of shelter and was impressed with the comparative comfort of the interiors. The person who looks for armchairs will be disappointed, but in some of the larger basements there is plenty of space to walk about and in some there is even central heating. Most shelters have been constructed to withstand any likely fall of masonry and air locks to keep out gas have been installed. They have been arranged within a short distance of areas such as the centre of town where there are usually considerable congregations of people. They are primarily intended for

the protection of people caught in the streets in an emergency. Nine are now ready with the cellars under Peas Hill holding 400 people 39 12 08b

1939 12 15

More shelters being erected [7.14]

1939 12 15

Black-out Deaths. Two women have died in accidents which occurred in the black-out. In one case, where the woman was killed almost instantly, the accident occurred in the Trumpington road, near the Evelyn Nursing Home. Miss Mabel Timms was struck by a lorry owned by Dickerson. The other was at the junction of Histon Road and Gilbert Road. Maria Elizabeth Smith was knocked down by a bus 39 12 15 CIPof

1939 12 18

Police are dragging the river for two local cyclists who disappeared during the black-out after they had set out to cycle to their homes. Following a report that what appeared to be two cycles had been seen lying on the bed of the river near Dant's Bridge police commenced dragging and recovered a lady's machine. Later a man's cycle was brought to the surface. They have been identified as belonging to the missing couple. The man could swim but had a disabled leg due to a football injury. The girl is the daughter of a stone mason and worked at a local factory. 39 12 18 & a

1939 12 22

Petrol rationing is focussing attention on town gas as an alternative fuel for motor vehicles. One of the Cambridge University and Town Gas Light Company's coke lorries has just been fitted with a gas container to enable it to run without petrol. The lorry carries enough gas for 11 or 12 miles, which is adequate for deliveries of coke in the district. The range could be extended by putting a second bag on the trailer 39 12 22

1939 12 23

For two years a small community of Basque children have been our guests. Cambridge has become familiar with the little black-eyed, black-haired boys and girls and has enjoyed watching them dance and sing. They arrived under tragic circumstances, racked and nervous; the peace and quiet of the country village of Pampisford, redeemed and restored them. Now they have been adopted into English homes until they can return in safety to their own beloved land of Spain. Now a booklet has been published about their experiences 39 12 23

1939 12 27

War could not 'black-out' the Christmas Eve Festival of nine lessons and carols at King's. From the crowded chapel the message of peace and goodwill travelled by wireless across Europe to France, Italy and Switzerland. The candles flickered even after black-out for a test showed no dangerous amount of light could be seen from outside. But there were dark, blank spaces among the rich glory of the stained windows which told of the removal of some of the glass for safety's sake. 39 12 27a

1939 12 28

Cambridge public air raid shelters are nearing completion and the public is urged to visit specimen shelters. When complete there will be 60 new public shelters accommodating 6,700 people. They include the basement at Scroope House and the Union Society – detailed survey 39 12 28a

1939 12 29

Christmas, 1939 has meant more solemn thoughts than usual for many. In countless homes, the traditional joy and gaiety has been tempered by absence of one or more members of the family. And yet, in spite of gaps at the dinner table, and because the advice to carry on as usual is so obviously sound, there has been little outward change in the character of the Christmas festival. In Cambridge, as elsewhere, people remembered their absent ones, but through the inspiring co-operation of the radio, were able to satisfy themselves that the men in the Services were not forgotten. At home, it was



the usual day of gifts—the children's day—and for many the delight lay in entertaining little evacuees whose parents were unable to do the job themselves. The change in the times was reflected, perhaps, in the opening of some cinemas on Christmas day, but found themselves comparatively few patrons; it was still a home festival for most. The Town club had their usual football fixture in the morning, but this had to be scratched. On Boxing Day their fixture with Rushden resulted in a decisive win for Cambridge. Another regular feature was the appearance of the Christmas Day bathers, who found not thick ice, but a deep fog to greet them. 39 12 29 CIPof

1939 12 30

Communist Party pamphlet on Cambridge in war described as “sheer effrontery” [1.25]